SPEECHES

OF

M. DE MIRABEAU.


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SEP

SPEECHES

OF

M. DE MIRABEAU

THE ELDER,

PRONOUNCED IN THE

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

OF FRANCE.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE AND CHARACTER.

I have been, I am, I will be to my grave, the man of public liberty, the man of the conſtitution. Woe to the privileged orders, if privileges conſtitute the man of the *people*, and not rather the man of the *nobles*; for *privileges* ſhall have an end, but the *people* is eternal.

MIRABEAU.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH EDITION OF M. MEJAN.

BY JAMES WHITE, ESQ.

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ERRATUM.

In the grammatical note at the end of the ſpeech on the right of war and peace, for *lo pueblo*, read *el pueblo*.

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PREFACE.

WHEN the former part of the tranſlated ſpeeches of Mirabeau, was preſented to the public, three remaining volumes of the original were expected from the preſs. I was impatient for their appearance: I felt an earneſt deſire to continue the taſk which I had undertaken: my wiſhes have, at length, been gratified, and this volume completes the ſelection of all that is moſt illuſtrious, in *The Labours of Mirabeau at the National Aſſembly.*

This extraordinary ſtateſman is, I am induced to think, not univerſally a fa-

vourite with the people of this kingdom. The ſervants of the government diſcountenance his name; the adherents of the oppoſition have little cauſe to be his admirers*. But it is for theſe very reaſons, that I perſiſt in being his interpreter; it is for theſe very reaſons, that I have fingled out, with avidity, his maſter-ſtrokes of greatneſs, that I have exerted all my faculties for the extenſion of his renown, and endeavoured to contribute towards enſuring its immortality.

Yet, that the miniſters of a monarchy ſhould diſcourage the fame of men, who have been ſignalized as the leaders of a democratic party, is not at all aſtoniſhing; it is the duty of their place; and although, in their hearts, they may admire the

* See his ſpeech on *The Addreſs to the King, beſeeching him to diſmiſs his miniſters.* Vol. I. page 138.

works

works of Mirabeau, they muſt accommodate their language to their ſtation. As little is to be wondered at, that the oppoſition ſhould hate a man, who ſo clearly underſtood the exact value of its patriotiſm.

In all the ungenerous pamphlets, written againſt a revolution, which, notwithſtanding its defects, ſhould not be frowned on by a free people, no exception whatever hath been made in favour of the man, who had ſtruggled to reconcile and blend the principles of democracy, with the bleſſings of a limited monarchy. The virtues and the talents of a Mirabeau are entitled, to diſtinction, and even to applauſe, from every nation which can pride herſelf in literature and liberty; and the children of ſcience and of freedom ſhould have been the laſt, to

calumniate the friend and the ornament of humanity *.

France, however, hath ſhewn her gratitude to the memory of him dead, who, while living, was the idol and the oracle of her legiſlature. If faction and ſelf-intereſt waged war againſt his views, they ſcrupled not to reverence his abilities. As a politician, he occaſionally experienced interruption; as an orator, he never knew what it was to be deſpiſed. The cloſeneſs of his reaſoning was relieved and illuſtrated, by the fire and the majeſty of his declamation. None coughed, none muttered curſes, none ſtole away to dinner, when *Mirabeau* roſe to ſpeak: his admiring auditors paid him the homage of deep ſilence, and, when he

* No man was more expoſed to what he himſelf expreſſively terms, "the barking of envious mediocrity."

ceaſed

ceaſed, their natural deficiency of phlegm, betrayed them into the moſt animated proofs of approbation. No gaudy ideas, no glittering verboſity, amuſed the ear and the imagination at the expence of the underſtanding, nor diſtracted attention from the main ſubject of debate: it was not a diſplay of fire-works, but a grand and awful diſcharge of artillery, doing effectual execution upon the auxiliaries of deſpotiſm.

The more completely to diſcredit the reputation of Mirabeau, and to inſpire all Europe with an unfavourable opinion of him, a calumny, which had originated with his enemies at home, was circulated induſtriouſly through all the neighbouring kingdoms. It was reported that he was an atheiſt. That he was not, I moſt ſincerely and ſolemnly believe. I call to

calumniate the friend and the ornament of humanity *.

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witneſs the celebrated ſpeech, in this volume *; a ſpeech, wherein he traces the diſpenſation of Chriſt, from the pomp which now ſurrounds it, to its remote and humble origin; a ſpeech, wherein he proves, not only the triumphant excellence of that heaven-ſuggeſted ſyſtem, but likewiſe evinces, that he underſtood and felt, the full importance and effect of both natural and revealed religion. Without doubt, a man of eloquence, though an unbeliever in his heart, might make a plauſible and fluent diſcourſe, upon the advantages of religion; but he could never reach the ſummit of that bold and fervid oratory, which, while it ſends conviction into the minds of thoſe who hear him, is an indiſputable evidence of his own.

Miniſters of the holy goſpel ſhould ne-

* The ſpeech on *The civil conſtitution of the Clergy.*

ver reſort to calumny. Let them puniſh the real rebel, as they ought, and when they can; but let them not heap unjuſt odium on his character; leſt, while aſſerting the Almighty's rights in one reſpect, they offend him moſt groſsly in another.

To ſimplify, is not to deſtroy. Inſtead of branding the whole French nation, as a race of godleſs fools, the enraged writers of anti-revolution pamphlets, ſhould have known that the people of France conſiſts of three deſcriptions of men; of the eccleſiaſtic, who wiſhes to lead the life of a voluptuary, of the infidel, or pſeudo-philoſopher, and of thoſe who, like M. Mirabeau, are friends to purified Chriſtianity.

Deiſm is inſufferable in a Chriſtian land, atheiſm every where. I can aſſure my fellow-citizens, that, were there any

thing in the following ſpeeches, which, in the ſlighteſt degree, tended to vilify religion, I ſhould be the laſt man living to publiſh it.

I am not acquainted with the private life of Mirabeau. But, it is not at all impoſſible, that a young nobleman, infected by faſhionable ſociety, and miſled by faſhionable productions, might have unwarily admitted notions, which, afterwards, reflection, and his judgment, now matured, determined him to abjure and abandon. Like the repentant publican, he might ſtand afar off, and, ſmiting his contrite breaſt, cry, "God be merciful to me a ſinner." Like the ſaint, who had been the diſciple of Gamaliel, he might, from having been a perſecutor, become an apoſtle of Chriſtianity.

Titus, the Roman emperor, and Henry

the

the Fifth of England *, eſcaped from the labyrinth of error, in good time: the regenerated libertine became a luminary of devotion, and the paragon and hero of benignity.

But Titus, and Henry, and Mirabeau, had genius; genius, which lay hid under the burthen of their infirmities, and which panted for an opportunity, to vindicate the worth of its poſſeſſor.

Grattan, after his eloquent exertions on the tithe-bill, would, doubtleſs, have been ſlandered for an atheiſt, had there been any thing in the circumſtances of his earlier life and character, which could have held out to revenge a pretence for miſrepreſenting him. But, as Mirabeau himſelf obſerves, there are "perſons,

* "I will redeem the time
Upon the head of Hotſpur."

"whoſe

" whoſe very name diſarms calumny, and " whoſe reputation, both as public and " private men, the moſt headſtrong libel- " lers have never eſſayed to tarniſh; " men, in fine, who, without blemiſh, " without views of intereſt, and without " fear, will be honoured even to the " grave, both by their friends and by " their enemies *."

With reſpect to the late revolution, it were to be wiſhed, that its admirers here, had learned to moderate their admiration, and forborne to pronounce public and unſeaſonable encomiums on it. " A fool- iſh friend is worſe than a wiſe enemy." An ill-timed panegyric may prove as miſchievous as a ſatire. Hyperbolical praiſe provokes extravagant abuſe. The

* See his ſecond ſpeech *On the Rights of War and Peace.*

art

art of wondering judiciouſly, is a uſeful qualification.

The new French conſtitution, is neither the moſt glorious maſter-piece of human wiſdom, nor—a moſt abominable fabric of folly and impiety.

Let us caſt our eyes on Europe. Government and liberty defame and defy each other. Monarchy looks around her, with ſuſpicion, with indignation, with diſmay. Ariſtocracy knits her brows, and ſeeks to hide her trepidation, under the gallant maſk of fortitude. Epiſcopacy turns pale, and, ever and anon, raiſes her hand to her head, to refix her tottering mitre. Faction, meanwhile, like the god with the double face, looks two ways at once, and pleads for power and intereſt, in the language of patriotiſm.

Let us now make a grand progreſs, through

through theſe four diviſions of the political world.

" Kings,—if once a nation be determined to become free, no artifice, no violence, on your part, can prevent her. In vain do ye beſet your frontiers with troops; in vain do ye interdict what ye term ſeditious writings; anxiety herſelf is for a teſtimony againſt ye, and operates to your utter diſcomfiture; ſhe uncloſes the ſleeping eye of reaſon, ſhe emboldens ſtrength, ſhe engenders public ſpirit, and re-ſharpens the edge of curioſity.

Kings,—adviſe with the ſincere, and ſlight the counſels of the crafty. Give ear to thoſe who underſtand the heart of man, who can whiſper to you delicious ſecrets of ſubſtantial popularity.

O thou, who, in the chambers of the Eſcurial, art lamenting the fate of royalty,

why

why wilt thou not voluntarily and magnanimouſly beſtow, what, otherwiſe, will ere long be extorted from thee? Why wilt thou not conſecrate thy name to immortality; why wilt thou not become a very god amidſt thy people?—Do not wait for the voice of ſolicitation; ſtill leſs run the riſk of indignity. Take pattern from your brother of Poland; gather together your wiſe men; frame a free conſtitution; then aſſemble the *Cortes*, and tell your delighted citizens, that you have renounced the rod of deſpotiſm.

Yes, be beforehand with the aſſertors of humanity. Outſtrip the deſigns of the philanthropiſt and the philoſopher; make it a point of virtuous jealouſy, to admit of no patriot in the nation, but yourſelf. Do this, and your grandeur will eclipſe that of the Cæſars; do this, and you will be

be enrolled amongſt the benefactors of the world; do this, and your dominion will be eſtabliſhed upon adamant.

The Imperial Auſtrian hath juſt paid the debt of nature: may his ſucceſſor, as firſt in European dignity, ſigh alſo to be the firſt in beneficence, and aſpire to add, to the auguſt catalogue of his titles, the ſublime appellation of THE FATHER OF CHRISTENDOM.

Arbitreſs of the North, your frozen empire is not yet ripe for liberty. There, philoſophy and the arts are ſtill only in their adoleſcence. Your ſubjects are but half civilized: but they will one day be free. Let your ſceptre, then, lie light upon their ſhoulders; be the foundreſs of that ſtructure, which others are to elevate; become the herald of that freedom, which is to convey the light of ſcience, and the

balm

balm of proſperity, to the comfortleſs and rude nations that are neighbours to the Pole. All great events have their forerunners. It is yours, to ſow the ſeeds of that happineſs, which your ſucceſſors are to guard in its maturity; it is yours, to ſee that it take root; it is yours to cheriſh it. Suffer your people to acquire a taſte for a more mild and equal government; inſtruct it in the rudiments of national greatneſs; engrave upon the public mind the firſt principles of liberty, principles, which no future Ruſſian ruler may deſtroy. Then, when at length, the glorious duty ſhall be fulfilled, when the beauteous edifice ſhall be completed, your name will be remembered with a pious love, as the Baptiſt is revered, who was the harbinger of Chriſtianity; it will be adored through an immenſe portion of one hemiſphere;

miſphere; and, ſhould the gratitude of men invoke you, as a being more than mortal—Heaven itſelf will forgive them the idolatry.

Nobles of Europe, who, at this moment, are trembling for the very exiſtence of your order, and who imagine, that the good of mankind, and the preſervation of your privileges, are one and the ſame affair, be admoniſhed by the fate of thoſe degraded Ariſtocrates, who are now ſuffering for the injuſtice and faſtidiouſneſs of their forefathers. You yourſelves are the cauſe of the calamities which threaten you, and which, if they do not fall on your heads, will infallibly overwhelm your poſterity. All the luxuries, all the vanities, all the arrogant diſtinctions, which ye perpetually deviſe, to mortify your fellow-citizens, and to remove them

far

far away from you, ſerve only to provoke their envy, and to give birth to thoſe inconvenient and alarming interrogatories, concerning the equality and original rights of men. Ye tantalize your inferiors, ye diſguſt them with your follies, ye afflict them with your ſcorn, and ye exaſperate them by your iniquity. Ye live, as if ye thought, that the only real uſe of riches, was to expend them in the humiliation of the democracy.

Nobles of Europe, be moderate, be juſt; it is the only mean left for the ſalvation of your dignity. The oſtentation of the firſt Cæſar proved his ruin; the more politic Auguſtus walked humbly before the people, and thus blunted the edge of its indignation.

Ye ſeem to have forgotten the very eſſence of your order; to have apoſtatized

from the genius of your inſtitution. That eſſence, that genius, was parental, not tyrannical; it implied reſpectability, not worthleſſneſs; it ſignified virtue, not vice; it meant wiſdom, not frivolity. Would ye know what are your true privileges, what your true characteriſtics, and what your proper weight in the balance of ſociety, I will picture them to you, in the words of the noble Arab, who ſaid: "When I went out to the gate, through "the city, when I prepared my ſeat in "the ſtreet, the young men ſaw me, and "hid themſelves, and the aged aroſe, "and ſtood up: the princes refrained from "talking, and laid their hand upon "their mouth. The nobles held their "peace, and their tongue cleaved to the "roof of their mouth. When the ear "heard me, then it bleſſed me; and

"when

" when the eye ſaw me, it gave witneſs
" to me; becauſe I delivered the poor
" that cried, and the fatherleſs, and him
" that had none to help him. The bleſ-
" ſing of him that was ready to pe-
" riſh, came upon me; and I cauſed the
" widow's heart to ſing for joy. I put
" on righteouſneſs, and it clothed me; my
" judgment was as a robe and a diadem.
" I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I
" to the lame. I was a father to the
" poor; and the cauſe which I knew not, I
" ſearched out. And I brake the jaws of the
" wicked, and plucked the ſpoil out of his
" teeth. My root was ſpread by the waters,
" and the dew lay all night upon my
" branch. My glory was freſh in me, and
" my bow was renewed in my hand. Unto
" me men gave ear, and waited, and kept
" ſilence at my counſel. After my words,
" they ſpake not again, and my ſpeech

" dropped upon them. And they waited
" for me, as for the rain, and they open-
" ed their mouth wide as for the latter
" rain. I choſe out their way, and ſate chief,
" and dwelt as a king in the army, as one
" that comforteth the mourners."

Here, nobles of Europe, was ariſtocracy in the ſublime. The Arabian Sheik, or Emir, repreſented in that ancient and divine romance, from which theſe verſes are ſelected, hath, in deſcribing his own perſonal character and conſequence, exhibited an illuſtrious and precious pattern of nobility.

Diſprivileged lords of France, ye cannot ſay, that deſtruction came upon ye unexpectedly. A rumbling ſound gave notice, that the earthquake was at hand.

Nobles of a certain iſland renowned for arts and arms, if you be jealous of your privileges (and well you may, for they

are

are the faireſt privileges that ever peers could boaſt of), evince to your fellow-citizens that you are worthy of them. Take delight in being conſidered as THE FATHERS OF THE PEOPLE. Endeavour to monopolize the pre-eminence in probity. Recollect that true nobility conſiſts in ſomething more, than in being "ſtuck o'er with titles, and hung round with ſtrings." Nothing, but a national conviction that you are of uſe, can ſave you from the uncivil hand of contemptuous democracy. Let not the appellation of *lord* become a term of ſly reproach, and the ſubject of the people's raillery. Aſſert the native dignity of your order. Shine out in all the luſtre of your anceſtors. Depend, for the honour and ſtability of your claſs, upon its own intrinſic excellence: for that is the grand

bulwark which you muſt raiſe for your defence, and, without that bulwark, you will prove acceſſory to your own ruin; the ariſtocracy of that iſland will become a ſelf-deſtroyer.

Abhor inſignificance, as you would a treacherous enemy, who is ſecretly undermining the foundations of your power. Repulſe the frivolity of the times; aſſemble, and take an oath, that henceforward you will do nothing that is not magnanimous and dignified; by a glorious frank-pledge become ſureties for the grandeur and renown of one another. In your prime be auguſt, when you are old, be venerable. Perſonal reſpect is the firmeſt pillar of authority; a pillar, which will outlaſt the moſt long-lived form of government, and will continue unſhakeable, amidſt all the ſhocks

of

of innovation. So ſhall the tiara remain ſteady upon your brows, ſo ſhall your ermined robes be kiſſed with filial reverence; the one ſhall be as a garland, beſtowed as the prize of virtue, and as the ſymbol of bright wiſdom irradiating the legiſlature; the other ſhall be to you, as the ſacred mantle of Elijah, which enabled the wearer to work miracles of beneficence.

Prelates of a certain iſland renowned for arts and arms, I would not be underſtood to caſt rebuke upon the men, who at preſent wear the mitre in that iſland. Few churches, in modern hiſtory, have been governed by a conclave, which, on the whole, better deſerved the approbation of ſociety. But there are privileges to be aboliſhed, there are grievances to be redreſſed, which are a ſcandal to the

people, a reproach to legiſlation, a ſtumbling-block to government, and an outrage to Chriſtianity. Is it politic, is it juſt, is it humane, is it religious, that one miniſter of the goſpel ſhould riot in a revenue of eighteen thouſand pounds a year, and that another, perhaps alike devout, and full as learned, ſhall with difficulty exiſt upon eighteen pounds a year? that one miniſter of God's word, ſhall wear purple and fine linen, and fare ſumptuouſly every day, while hundreds of his fellow-miniſters have not raiment for their families, have not food? To murmur at ſuch a grievance, is neither ſedition nor impiety, neither anarchy nor atheiſm; it is the daring diſcontent of reaſon, and the imperative dictate of national neceſſity.

Is it decent, that an eccleſiaſtic, appointed

pointed to a biſhopric, in a mountainous and rude province, remote from the metropolis, ſhould neither underſtand his flock, nor be underſtood by them? Is it decent, or rather is it not ridiculous and profane, that a pontiff ſhould never commune with his ſpiritual children, except through the medium of an interpreter? Theſe, alas! are not the days, when the Holy Ghoſt would deſcend from heaven, in order to confer the gift of tongues. I myſelf have been a witneſs to the indecency which I cenſure. A confirmation was to be held in a little town amongſt the hills. Several hundreds of the youth of both ſexes were aſſembled; and, previouſly to the ceremony, the meek miniſter of the pariſh, was obliged to teach the prelate to pronounce by rote, what

was

was to be muttered over the heads of the juvenile congregation. Now, this is another grievance, and partakes, I vow to the Heavens, of both anarchy and impiety.

But theſe remote biſhopricks, of moderate revenue, are too convenient to royal power, for the nation to expect, that the remedy of the abuſe is to iſſue from that quarter. They are the firſt ſtep in the ladder of epiſcopal promotion, a probationary ſtate, in which the mitred candidate gives proofs of his devotion to the *miniſtry*. Better things are in view. The firſt ſtep of the ladder is of braſs, the ſecond of ſilver, the third of gold and precious ſtones.

It is ardently to be wiſhed, that politics would permit the prelates of that iſland

to

to reſide at their reſpective dioceſes, inſtead of furniſhing them with an excuſe for lingering, during three-fourths of the year, in the midſt of a luxurious capital, where they muſt continue paſſive witneſſes of that ſpirit of diſſipation, which inſpires the greater part of the inhabitants. Is it abſolutely requiſite, that a biſhop ſhould be a baron of parliament? Can human wiſdom deviſe no method leſs objectionable, of ſuperintending the intereſts of religion in the legiſlature? Is it neceſſary that the clergy ſhould be doubly repreſented? Is not the clergy already repreſented in the lower houſe? Do not beneficed eccleſiaſtics vote as freeholders, at the elections? When religion hath aught to aſk from, or to ſuggeſt to, the great council, might not the pontiff communicate his ſentiments to his flock,

might not his flock convey their joint opinion to the repreſentatives?

Again: a deep and diſaſtrous wound is inflicted upon Chriſtianity, by your culpable want of care in the article of ordination. Hence thoſe ſwarms of faſhionable and unfit eccleſiaſtics, who, at the preſent day, bear the opprobrious title of *buck parſons*. Should a fatal decay of diſcipline take place amongſt the ſoldiery, might not the blame, with much juſtice, be imputed to the general officers? When a young man is deſtined for the political adminiſtration, with what anxiety, with what exerciſe, with what laborious ſtudy, is he not educated for a poſt of ſo great national importance? But when a young gentleman is deſigned for the ſacred and more momentous employment of God's miniſtry, he hath little elſe to

do,

do, with reſpect to qualification, than to cut off his queüe, and change his green coat for a black one. Prelates, are ye well aware of the miſchief reſulting from this careleſſneſs? If once the laity look with contempt upon the miniſters of religion, that contempt will imperceptibly extend to religion herſelf. The maſs of mankind is, in general, but too prone, to confound the function with the functionary. He who is to inſtruct others, ſhould have more wiſdom than his audience, he who is to be their model ſhould have more piety *.

* Many, however, of our young clergymen (I myſelf am acquainted with many) are an honour to their profeſſion.—But no thanks to the biſhops for that. Here too let us not forget the praiſe which is ſo deſervedly beſtowed, by all travellers into Scotland, upon the clergy of that kingdom.

A ſenſible

Here, then, ye men of God, are ſtill other privileges, which call for abolition, and to murmur at which, is neither anarchy nor atheiſm.

A ſenſible and worthy traveller *, of the preſent day, relates, that, in Spain, the meeting of two prelates is a phænomenon. There, the moment that a churchman accepts the honours of epiſcopacy, he takes leave of the court, and of the great world, for ever, and, retiring to his dioceſe, ſurrenders up his time to the edification of thoſe, whom Heaven hath entruſted to his vigilance and piety. Once in his life, and but once, ſhould a biſhop be ſeen at levee; his name ſhould never re-echo through the precincts of the palace, but on the day when

* The Rev. Joſeph Townſend.

he

he comes to thank his royal patron for his mitre.

But your reſidence in the capital, and your attendance at court, are venial, in compariſon of the inhuman inequality, between your ſplendid incomes and the deplorable eſtates, aſſigned to too many of the ſubaltern clergy. The fault, it muſt be admitted, is not altogether yours: you leave things as you found them: nevertheleſs, it is a treſpaſs, in the opinion of a great people, that you are employing no meaſures for the mitigation of this calamity. Notwithſtanding queen Ann's bounty, and the compaſſionate donations occaſionally beſtowed, very many of the moſt aſſiduous of the labourers in Chriſt's vineyard, have nothing like a ſufficient livelihood. Their condition is a ſtigma on a ſtate profeſſing Chriſtianity.

Every

Every miniſter of the goſpel ſhould have one hundred pounds a year; every married miniſter of the goſpel, at leaſt, one hundred and fifty. Away with pluralities, with non-reſidence, with ſinecures. Will no voice rouſe the legiſlature to debate upon theſe grievances? Should it ever be my lot, to become a member of that aſſembly, I will agitate theſe queſtions, if not with ability, at leaſt with zeal. I will alarm the pontiffs and great men of the land; I will cry, woe to the *privileged orders* of eccleſiaſtics, and woe to that whole government, who ſupinely ſurvey the miſery of God's miniſters. I will; unleſs ſome able and honeſt ſenator, ſome man of the *true* party, ſhall anticipate my deſign, and glorioufly defraud me of a glorious popularity.

But, to deſcend from theſe aerial heights,

to

to the level of that diſcreet phlegm, ſo acceptable, ſo dear, to the heart of many an Engliſh *man*, and to continue the circuit of my propoſed animadverſions:

Men of faction, were ye but aware, of the diſadvantages which attend on your unwiſe career of politics, we ſhould not every day behold ſo many men of undoubted talents, depreciating their own worth, and diſappointing their own hopes. The mind of the factious man becomes the victim of infatuation. Faction narrows the heart, faction blinds the underſtanding. Party, on the contrary, enlightens the underſtanding, and enlarges the heart. True party hath a tendency to elevate the ſoul, and to refine the intellectual faculties. Therefore, whenever ye ſee a perſon of abilities, entangled

in ſelfiſh, cunning, inconſiſtent operations, reſt aſſured, that faction hath entered into his heart, and that ſhe is tormenting him, after the manner of a dæmon. The man of genius then becomes a dunce, the philoſopher a fool, the man of argument ſophiſtical, the declaimer outrageous, the man of temper irritable, and he who never poſſeſſed temper, worſe than ever he was before; the warrior ſtains his ſcarlet, the judge his ermine, and the "ſaint in lawn," ſullies the whiteneſs of his ſleeves.

It hath been conciſely ſaid by Monteſquieu, that *the conſtitution of England is a democracy, under the maſk of monarchy.* Were that philoſopher now alive, we might ſupply him with another pithy ſentence; namely, *that the legiſlative body of Britain, is an ariſtocracy under the maſk of*

of democracy. I apprehend, that this notion is not a new one, though, perhaps, it may not have been pronounced exactly in the preſent form.

The fiefleſs nobles of Britain poſſeſs no *avowed* privileges, which are not uſeful and neceſſary to her ſyſtem of ſocial order. It is the *ſecret* privilege of extending their influence, through every pore and fibre of the body politic, which it behoves the Britiſh people to oppoſe, and to aboliſh. The influence of the ariſtocracy is a ſubtile and penetrating acid, which hath ſoaked into the entire maſs of the conſtitution.

I have juſt repeated an idea, which I obſerved was not a new one: I will now advance another, which I believe is not a trite one. No perſon, who, in any part of the Britiſh empire, is a member of the

ariſtocracy, can, conſiſtently with principles, be permitted to act as a repreſentative of the democracy. This is more than abſurd; it is a very great abuſe. Indeed, with reſpect to too many things in this world, we live in a perpetual deluſion. This aukward, unconſtitutional, and dangerous circumſtance, is ſuffered to remain uncenſured. It is *aukward*, that a perſon who profeſſes democracy, ſhould be decorated with the trappings of ariſtocracy. The words *noble lord* ſhould never be heard within the walls of the democratic aſſembly. It is *unconſtitutional*, that he who, in one part of the Britiſh dominions, is by birth, by habits, and by privilege an ariſtocrate, ſhould, in another, be a member of the democracy. To-day, he is a ſimple plebeian; next week (for he hath only to croſs the Channel), he will be

a patrician; the week after, he may again relapſe into his democratic character, and, the week after that, he may be again a gallant noble. This is pleaſant conjuration. It is *dangerous*, that an hereditary member of the ariſtocracy, ſhould be ſuffered to become a repreſentative of the people. He cannot ſerve God and Mammon. For, either he will carry with him into the Houſe of Commons, the lordly ſpirit of nobility, and retain the towering prejudices peculiar to that order, or he will bring back with him into the Houſe of Peers, the leaven of democracy, which may create a fermentation, where no ſuch fermentation ſhould exiſt.

To ſuch a ſenator the commons might ſay: Depart, you wear a coronet; you are not one of us; aſſociate with perſons

of your own order, with patricians. And here let me declare, that I would not be underſtood to throw any perſonal reflection, on ſuch titled individuals, as at preſent enjoy ſeats in the Britiſh Houſe of Commons; many of them are worthy noblemen; but it is becauſe they are noblemen, that I wiſh they were not there *.

Again: Suppoſe a queſtion to be brought forward in the Engliſh Houſe of Commons, which queſtion materially concerns the democratic intereſt. This commoner of the half blood, begotten by luſty

* When the tribunitian authority was firſt inſtituted at Rome, a law was paſſed, prohibiting any patrician from exerciſing the office of tribune. The violation of this law, in the latter days of the republic, was one great cauſe of the deſtruction of Roman liberty.

Democracy

Democracy on condeſcending Ariſtocracy, this patricio-plebeian ſenator, will find himſelf in a diſgraceful dilemma. If, true to his hereditary character, he oppoſe the people, in the people's own houſe, with what face can he preſume to ſit there? But what if he ſupport the queſtion? and what if ſuch another queſtion ſhould be agitated in the Iriſh parliament? Will the noble lord, when with breathleſs haſte he enters the Hibernian Houſe of Peers, become, on a ſudden, infected with the contagion of ariſtocracy, and utter principles the very reverſe of his late patriotiſm in the Britiſh legiſlature?—This, then, is one of the numerous inſtances, in which the ſubtile acid of ariſtocracy, is eating its way through the whole maſs of the conſtitution. I ſay, the whole maſs; for if the

ariſtocracy, either openly or *covertly*, uſurp an influence in the democratic aſſembly, it may afterwards overawe the throne, and then the entire conſtitution will be at the mercy of the ariſtocracy.

Again: a conſiderable portion of the lower houſe, is compoſed of the tender nurſlings of ariſtocracy; of eldeſt, and of younger ſons of peers; the former of whom have a certainty, the latter a chance, of being one day ſummoned to forſake the democracy, and to put on all the pride, and all the privileges of nobility. Yet here have we leſs cauſe to be alarmed, than at the irregularity abovementioned. Theſe youths are, as yet, no more than public gentlemen; and there is reaſon to believe and hope, that, even when hereafter uplifted to ariſtocracy,

cracy, they will preſerve a *kind* remembrance, of their old companions, the plebeians.

The French have been diſſatisfied, becauſe they could not conſolidate the commons and the nobility, into one national aſſembly. Whereas it behoves us, to keep the two orders far aſunder; for upon the juſt balance of the three powers of our triple-headed conſtitution, depends its proſperity, depends its exiſtence.

Such, therefore, are the privileges which ought to be aboliſhed, and to aboliſh which, were neither anarchy nor atheiſm.

But theſe, and ſome other abuſes, already murmured at in this preface, may be remedied with gravity, with legiſlative ſobriety; means which are far preferable to the fever of revolution. But, even

even could they no otherwiſe be done away, than at the expence of a revolution, let them continue where they are, and gently decay in concert with that invaluable ſyſtem, which, like all human things, cannot exiſt for ever and ever.

Having thus far aſſumed the ſtate and deportment of an author, let me ſubjoin a few paragraphs, in the character of a tranſlator.

A book, and particularly a French book, is not always the worſe for being interpreted into Engliſh. There is a ſuperior degree of vigour in the Engliſh tongue, which peculiarly adapts it to works of popular eloquence. But, beſides this national advantage, a ſentence may be expreſſed more neatly, a phraſe turned more elegantly, a period rounded off more harmoniouſly and more forcibly, in the

the tranſlation, than it is in the original. This obſervation, however, is to be confined to tranſlations from the modern languages, and, ſtill further, to proſe productions. No tranſlator, I am bold to ſay, can do juſtice to Demoſthenes. Cicero, indeed, may receive leſs injury, nay, in ſome reſpects, may be benefited by the hand of a tranſlator: his immoderately long periods may be judiciouſly divided, his tedious, and ſometimes unſeaſonable parentheſes, refitted, and reduced to better diſcipline; but no living language can ſupply a proper ſubſtitute, for the melody of his words, and for the harmony of his compoſition.

In aſſerting that Engliſh tranſlation may prove favourable to foreign writings, I ſpeak not from perſonal vanity. I ſpeak, becauſe I am ſenſible that what I ſay is true;

true; I am contending for the copiouſneſs, the manlineſs, the vigour, the ſterling weight, in a word, for the air of liberty, which characterize our language. A proſe production, eſpecially of eloquence, may not only be done juſtice to in an Engliſh dreſs, but abſolutely improved. And, if the colouring may be rendered more vivid, the drawing alſo may be rendered more correct, and the features ſtronger, and more prominent; the attitudes may be ennobled, and adorned with a new grace; and, here and there, a lurking beauty may be called forth into light; in fine, a harmonizing tint may be thrown over the whole, which, perhaps, it did not poſſeſs in the original *.

It

* But foreigners may ſometimes return us the favour. I have heard it remarked, more than once, that

It is, however, the duty of a tranſlator, to imitate, as much as poſſible, the ſound, and not only the ſound, but even the very ſhape of his author's words and ſentences; and, by a kind of polygraphic art, to take him off in every hue and lineament.

As to poetry, in the living languages, neither we, nor other nations, can boaſt the ſame advantages of tranſlation. The ſpirit evaporates, the grace is loſt. The renowned knight of La Mancha, as Cervantes informs us, happened to enter a printer's work-room, where the preſs was occupied by a tranſlation in verſe, of the *Orlando Furioſo*. The hero read a few paſſages of it, and then made the follow-

that *Locke's Eſſay* reads better in the French tranſlation, than in the original. The ſame remark hath been made with reſpect to *Hume's Hiſtory of England*, elegant as that work is in our native tongue.

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ing ingenious, and for the moſt part, true remark; that tranſlations in verſe, from modern poetry, were like the wrong ſide of a piece of tapeſtry, where, indeed, one ſees the figures, but the ſpirit and glow of the workmanſhip have vaniſhed, and where the whole is diſgraced by the knots and thrums of the worſteds.—To this remark, I have one exception to make, and that is in favour of Fairfax's Taſſo, which, though tranſlated in the days of Cromwell, is, for ſtrength, harmony, and likeneſs to the original, highly worthy of the eſteem of all who are addicted to polite literature. This book, like many other excellent books, is become ſcarce. As to the poetry of the ancients, Dryden and Pope have done for Virgil and Homer, the beſt that Engliſh verſe enabled them to do; and

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our venerable tranſlators of the Bible, in which there is much poetry, have ſucceeded, ſo as to be entitled to the admiration of ſucceſſive ages.

Before I quit the topic of tranſlation, let me take this opportunity of ſaying a few words, with reſpect to one other book, which well deſerves the eſtimation of the public. Though it be a work of a different nature from the orations of Mirabeau, it may not appear altogether unconnected, with the grandeur and proſperity of empires. It ſhall, therefore, come in by way of epiſode.

The production alluded to, is that valuable little book of the benignant and illuſtrious archbiſhop of Cambray, the title of which may be thus engliſhed: *Inſtructions for the Education of a Daughter.* This book I had eagerly ſought for, and as eagerly

eagerly tranſlated. I had never heard that it exiſted in an Engliſh dreſs. However, when I propoſed it to the bookſellers, ſome anſwered, that they had never before heard of ſuch a book; others, that it had been tranſlated many years ago; others obſerved, that it muſt be now too old-faſhioned; while others again had the temerity to infer, from its being little known, that the book itſelf had never been of any value.

Nevertheleſs, if we may be allowed to hazard a conjecture, the true objection was, that the nation was about to be gratified with a new publication of Madame de Sillery, who is better known by her late title of Counteſs de Genlis. I think well of the labours, and pay homage to the good intentions, of this philanthropic woman of quality. But I am very apprehenſive,

prehenſive, that to write *effectually*, upon the great buſineſs of education, and, ſtill more, upon the education of damſels, is a taſk above the ſtrength of womankind. The writings of Madame de Genlis may, doubtleſs, do *ſome* good; but, like all other female ſyſtems of female education, they are materially and radically defective. I fear that the ladies only ſkim the ſurface of things. With reſpect to the education of damſels, there are certain reaſons which render it impoſſible, for a woman to write upon it with completeneſs and fidelity.

I therefore ſtrenuouſly call the attention of the public, to the compact, but able treatiſe of the archbiſhop of Cambray. If I am not to publiſh it, at leaſt I will recommend it. Thoſe who cultivate the French tongue, will do well to enquire

for the original; the Engliſh reader will be fortunate, in procuring that old tranſlation, if, indeed, any ſuch exiſts. As for mine, which I had accompanied with notes and a preface, containing divers uſeful, comical, and comfortable obſervations, I ſhall, one of theſe days, cauſe two or three hundred copies of it to be printed; which copies I mean to give away, to ſuch as may conſider the preſent worth accepting. This will probably become productive of ſtill further benefit; for then perhaps ſome perſon will dare to pirate the tranſlation, and thus the public will obtain it at laſt *.

And

* I cannot here refrain from relating another odd and unpleaſant circumſtance. As the mind muſt not always remain on the rack of politics, I ſometimes amuſe myſelf with writing ſtory-books. And why not; if ſo grave a man as the archbiſhop of Cambray

And here the queſtion may be ſtarted, why this production of the great Fenelon, ſhould have dwindled out of faſhion, while his Telemachus ſtill triumphs over caprice and falſe taſte. I will endeavour to anſwer this interrogatory.

Our great-grandmothers (for the book was written at the cloſe of the laſt cen-

Cambray condeſcended to write fairy tales? (*Vide* the French grammar.) I had produced an original work, which I called the *New Arabian Nights Entertainments.* But behold, when I applied to a bookſeller, I was informed that there was actually in the preſs, a tranſlation of a French work, of the very ſame nature, and of which I had never till then heard. When this laſt ſhall come forth, I hope the public will be pleaſed with it; but I hope, likewiſe, that my *home manufacture*, my *Engliſh* New Arabian Tales, will not be utterly deſpiſed, in favour of the foreigner. For, verily, there are ſome ſtories in mine, to which the caliph Haroun Alraſchid would have been very glad to liſten.

tury) imagined that the archbiſhop of Cambray ſaw too much of them; that he told more than was convenient to them; that he turned the heart of woman inſide out; that he was labouring to make them angels, while they themſelves were determined to continue human. Accordingly, the work went out of faſhion. Your great-grandmothers belied to your grandmothers, both the biſhop and his book; and your grandmothers defamed him to your mothers. At length, new treatiſes began to come *into* faſhion. Gentle eſſays were compoſed by females, upon female education. The women eagerly reſorted to writers of their own ſex, who had a fellow-feeling for their common infirmities; to writers, who either winked at, or could not ſee, the fundamental miſtakes and blemiſhes of womankind; to writers,

who

who confined themſelves to the cultivation of the manners, while they left the heart and the underſtanding a prey to barrenneſs and deſolation. In fine, the ſex fled for ſhelter, to perfidious mildneſs and ſuperficial philoſophy, from him who was addreſſing them with the affection of a parent, and with the fervour of an apoſtle.

Ah! my children (for ſometimes I affect to be old and inconſiderable), my children, in this, as well as in many other inſtances, a ſhe-friend is not always the beſt that you can have. You are the moſt beautiful women upon earth, and I wiſh to ſee you the moſt rational. Do juſtice, ah! do juſtice to that ſpirit and that capacity, with which nature, in a tranſport of partiality, hath endowed you. Recollect, my fair fellow-citizens, that

the fate of empire depends on *you*; that the juſt influence, which it becomes you to poſſeſs in civil ſociety, is the teſt and the guardian of our virtue: for, whereſoever the women begin to be held in diſeſteem, it is an indubitable ſign, that they have ſuffered frivolity and profligacy to uſurp the throne of ſenſe and honour, and that nation is declining to its downfall.

There is one point, in particular, to which I entreat you to pay immediate attention. Women are naturally proud; but fine women are ſtill prouder than women who are not fine; but a fine woman of *quality*, is the proudeſt of all fine beings. Take care, my children (I mean you who enjoy rank and titles); theſe are not the days, when it is a ſafe thing to be haughty. There is a powerful and un-

tameable ſpirit gone abroad, and it were prudence not to provoke it. The petty piques of women have produced wonderful viciſſitudes, in matters of far greater moment. In ancient Rome, the petty pique of a plebeian lady, gave occaſion to that grand victory, by which the people obtained a ſhare in the conſulſhip. It was objected to the late ducheſſes and counteſſes of France, that, while they hurried through the ſtreets of Paris in their carriages, they looked down upon the reſt of mankind, as it were upon the very outcaſts of ſociety *. The plain wife of the plebeian treaſures up the remembrance of the ſcornful aſpect, with which her inſolent ſuperior had ſurveyed her. "*That woman*" diſcloſes her chagrin to her huſband, and "*that man*" re-com-

* Mercier's *Tableau de Paris.*

municates it to his neighbours; the contagion ſpreads, and the odium and the enemies of ariſtocracy are augmented. Take care, my children; for theſe are not the days when it is a ſafe thing to be haughty. Does an affable and humane deportment diminiſh the luſtre of your beauty, or the antiquity of your pedigree, or the number of your footmen, and lovers?—But this is wandering too far; this belongs with more propriety, to the preface of the little book of the archbiſhop of Cambray.

Heed not faſhion, then, my children, in the important concern of education, but return with filial reverence, to thoſe who offer you inſtruction, which is both ſolid and efficacious; nor reſt all your hopes upon the *light ſummer morality*, which

which flows from the ruby lips of the ladies.

But to be grave—It hath been well obſerved, that if ever there were an angel in human ſhape, it was Fenelon. A man of genius, without affecting eccentricity, a man of learning without being arrogant, a courtier of Louis XIV. yet the indefatigable foe of deſpotiſm *, he remarked, at once with penetration and with regret, the political and moral wretchedneſs of the kingdom which gave him being, and dedicated his life and talents to her ſervice. The amiableneſs of his manners ſhed a luſtre upon his wiſdom, and reconciled

* When that monarch firſt read Telemachus, he is ſaid to have exclaimed; "Here is a man who tells me, that I have been, for theſe fifty years, miſtaking the art of reigning."—He could never after endure Fenelon. He uſed to call him *a writer of political romances.*

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the heart to his correction. With that eloquence in which Locke was deficient, and uninfected by that vanity *, for which Rouſſeau is contemptible, he reaſons without dryneſs, and invites attention without paradox. His Telemachus and *L'Education des Filles* are immortal proofs of my aſſertion, and ineſtimable monuments of his anxiety for thoſe, who moſt require the care of the prieſt and the philoſopher. Yes, the education of youth was the prime object of his labours; for this he meditated, for this he amaſſed the treaſures of antiquity, for this he explored the ſcriptures; but while delivering the reſult of his reflections and reſearches, with that purity and

* The moſt miſerable of all vanities, that of affecting to think differently from the bulk of mankind, with reſpect to the great points of Chriſtian revelation.

ſweetneſs

ſweetneſs ſo diſtinguiſhable in his ſtyle, no inſinuation ever eſcaped him, which might tend to offer inſult, to the undeniable and incomparable truths of Chriſtianity.

Nor were his virtues, as a politician, leſs precious. Profound, enlightened, liberal, he ſaw, he felt, what was due to the dignity and proſperity of man, and, as far as he could diſcreetly, in a nation whoſe chief was abſolute, confeſſed himſelf the advocate of liberty *. Here

* It was univerſally believed, that had his royal pupil lived to wear the crown of France, the generous youth would have reſtored the liberties of the people.—In mentioning Fenelon as a politician, we ought not to forget his *Proper Heads for the Self-examination of a King* (another book out of faſhion), in which the famous ſubject of *the Balance of Power*, is handled with ability, and, what is better, with virtue.

again that delightful and almoſt divine book, which he compoſed for the inſtruction of the young duke of Burgundy, preſents itſelf as a proof of his philanthropy. "If," ſays the Abbé Terraſſon, "the happineſs of the human race can "be the effect of an epic poem, the Te-"lemachus is the nobleſt preſent the "Muſes ever made to mankind."

Books, which flatter the weakneſſes of nature and of the times, will, in general, meet with a more ſudden and more warm reception, than ſincere and ſolid writings, which tell us what we are, and what we ſhould be. But, when this faſhionable rage is ſpent, and ſpent at laſt it will be, common ſenſe begins to pry into the dungeons of obſcurity, for deſert which lies neglected and forgotten. The deſpiſed volume is at length elevated to a juſt and

laſting

laſting fame, while the minion of frail faſhion is committed to irretrievable oblivion. Until the reign of queen Anne, the *Paradiſe Loſt* of Milton was little noticed, was little known; it did not ſuit the public taſte. At length Addiſon took fire at his undeſerved fate, and re-uſhered it into the preſence of his countrymen. Such alſo, for a time, was the fate of our adored Shakeſpeare. There is ſome merit, and I ſwear there is much pleaſure, in reſcuing from diſgrace, a production which deſerves to be eternal.

Perhaps, with regard to Fenelon, I may ſeem to fall into that indiſcreet admiration, to which I myſelf have made objections in a former paragraph. But, I am not commending the biſhop's little book, merely as a good piece of writing; the object and intent of the author are what

what I applaud; it is their producible effect, which I admire in idea, and which hath led me to this high praiſe, which juſt ſaves me ſoaring into hyperbole.

There is often, in men of parts, a cruel deficiency of judgment; cruel, ſince it is the cauſe of their doing harm to humankind. Eloquence, and what is uſually termed wit, and even the ſublimer powers of the imagination, in a word, *genius* may exiſt in men, unaccompanied by that ſort of ability, called *judgment*. The former is, perhaps, the reſult of particular temperament, and of a happy conſiguration of the intellectual apparatus. Might not the latter be thus defined: the grace of God, directing a wiſe and good man, to what is beſt for himſelf and for ſociety?

May we ever have ſuch men, for our ſenators,

ſenators, for our magiſtrates, for our miniſters. Grant us, ye Heavens, but this, and all will yet be well. For there is, in Britons, a kind of native, conſtitutional good ſenſe, an inveterate ſolidity, that will, in ſpite of all the efforts of folly to degrade them, bear them up to the very laſt, and ſnatch their manners from degeneracy *.

* Having now finiſhed the pleaſing taſk of interpreting the eloquence of *Mirabeau*, it is my intention to proceed immediately to tranſlate the well-written Hiſtory of the Revolution of France, by M. *Rabaut de Saint-Etienne*. This latter work will operate as a kind of commentary on the former.——In the following pages, I have deviated ſomewhat from the uſual mode of pointing, and endeavoured to imitate that of the ancients, which referred leſs to the ſenſe, than to the harmony of the compoſition.

SPEECHES

OF

M. DE MIRABEAU.

Letter written by M. DE CARAMAN *to M.* DE MIRABEAU *.

March 20, 1789.

I HERE incloſe, my lord, the two very affecting letters, which you have been ſo good to entruſt to my peruſal; they have impreſſed me with the deepeſt anxiety

* This letter, and the anſwer to it, together with the three ſubſequent articles, would have appeared with more propriety, in the firſt volume of the tranſ-

iety for one of the moſt reſpectable of men*, and for whom I have the greateſt affection. God grant that the firſt news we hear, may be to inform us of his recovery. The flattering reception which you met with at Marſeilles, hath, doubtleſs, given you ſtrong aſſurances of the confidence repoſed in you, by the inhabitants of that great city; and you are too much in love with order, which alone can enſure ſucceſs to the preſent object of the miniſtry, not to be ſenſible of the conſe-

lated ſpeeches of M. *de Mirabeau*. But my original intention was, to give only a few ſpecimens of his oratorical abilities, and not a complete ſelection of whatever could be moſt intereſting to an Engliſh reader, in the works of that great man. Is it not better that the articles above mentioned ſhould be introduced even thus aukwardly, than not at all?

* The father of M. Mirabeau.

quences of numerous aſſemblies, at a juncture when there reigns, I cannot tell for what reaſon, an afflicting effervescence. You underſtand me ſufficiently, to diſpenſe with my ſaying any thing more to you upon this ſubject. A mark of friendſhip and gratitude ought not to alarm the public; but you cannot give a greater proof of your love for the king, and for the happineſs of the kingdom, than by calming thoſe unquiet ſpirits, whom it became to look forward to the aſſembly of the States-General, as the only principle of national proſperity. It is by a calm line of conduct, that their confidence and friendſhip ſhould be ſhewn to you; and I expect it from yours. It is the prime object of the king's wiſhes, and if there be a moment, when ſuch conduct ſhould become a *principle*, it is when the

nation is assembling under the inspection of its monarch, in order to prepare a regeneration, capable of ensuring to it a lasting felicity.

I have the honour to be, with sincere attachment,

My Lord,

Your most humble

And most obedient servant,

The Count de CARAMAN.

M. MIRABEAU's *Answer.*

TWO things, my lord, equally astonish me in your letter; the interpretation which you put upon the word *public*, and the doubts which you express with regard to the true reason, of what you are pleased to term an afflicting effervescence.

For

For the univerſal diſcontent, which you conſider as an effervescence, there are certain reaſons, or motives, too notorious, not to do away every doubt which you entertain.

And firſt; the people is periſhing of hunger—There is one reaſon.—The chief perſons entruſted with authority in this province *, are accuſed of having, for theſe forty years, robbed the public of its corn.—There is another reaſon for you.

The inſolence and injuſtice of the privileged orders are increaſing every day: and there is a third reaſon.

It is matter of indignation, that, in contempt of the known intentions of the king, of the clear letter of his laws, &c. the benefit which he deſigns for the na-

* Provence.

tion ſhould be counteracted: or rather, that, with all the rage of pride and ambition combined, endeavours ſhould be made to render it impoſſible.—There is a fourth reaſon.

It is a real ſubject of alarm, to ſee that the king's commiſſioners, men moſt intimately connected with perſons in office, have entirely fallen off from their party.—There, my lord, you have a fifth reaſon.

We are grieved to the very heart, that the parliament ſhould perſiſt in trying and hanging wretches, whom famine alone had tempted to tranſgreſs the bounds of law; that the biſhop of Siſteron ſhould ſcatter pardon with a loud voice, and vengeance in a ſoft one; that you ſhould yield, in contradiction to your principles and your natural benevolence, to treacherous and unjuſt applications to ſend troops,

troops, to a place where troops have nothing at all to do, and where there is likely to be no diſturbance, but what our enemies wiſh to make; troops who may bring a deluge of miſchiefs upon the province, and who will never be of any uſe, excepting to the pride and vengeance of their worſhips of the long robe.—There now is a large aſſortment of other reaſons for diſcontent, and I ſuppreſs a thouſand more, from a regard for your ſenſibility.

And now I make bold to aſk you, of whom conſiſts that public, *whom the marks of love and gratitude which I receive, ſo much alarm?*——Men in office, when will you learn, that your clubs, and your levee-hunters, and your ſycophants, are not the public?—Figure to yourſelf, my lord, a hundred and twenty thouſand in-

dividuals at Marſeilles, a whole city, ſo induſtrious and ſo commercial, incurring the loſs of a day's labour, the windows hired out at one or two louis each, and horſes at the ſame rate; the coach of that man whoſe only merit was his love of equity, covered over with palm-branches, boughs of laurel and of olive; the people kiſſing the wheels; the women preſenting to him their infants as an offering; a hundred and twenty thouſand voices, from the *mouſſe* to the *millionaire* *, rending the heavens with acclamations, and ſhouting *Vive le roi* and * * * *; four or five hundred youths of the firſt families in the city, preceding him on horſeback; three hundred coaches following him; imagine this, my

* From the pooreſt of the rabble to the merchant worth a plum.

lord,

lord, and you will have a juſt idea of my departure from Marſeilles. You will alſo diſcover, firſt, that the *poſſedans-fiefs** of Aix are not the public; 2dly, that it is as impoſſible to prevent ſuch an *effervescence*, (ſince you are pleaſed to give it that term) as it is, my lord, to provoke it; 3dly, that men are more apt to run into the ſubmiſſiveneſs of gratitude, than into the exceſſes of licentiouſneſs; 4thly, in fine, that there was no other method of eſcaping all thoſe honours, than to flee from a poſt, to deſert which were both cowardice and ingratitude.—And now, do you think that ſuch an honourable, but embarraſſing eſcort, was conducted in ſo bad a manner, as to give you reaſon to complain of it? And, if you do not complain of it, why

* Perſons poſſeſſing fiefs.

do

do you deliver up your friends to your enemies, thoſe who applaud you to thoſe who hiſs you?

I have the honour to be, with great reſpect,

My Lord,

Your moſt humble

And moſt obedient ſervant,

The Count de MIRABEAU.

THE

THE FRENCH EDITOR

TO

THE READER.

THE name of M. Mirabeau is ſo connected with all the ſucceſſes of the National Aſſembly, that, in publiſhing a collection of the labours of that philoſophic legiſlator, we ſeem to be alſo publiſhing *almoſt* a hiſtory of the aſſembly itſelf.

You will not, then, take it amiſs, that theſe articles are here inſerted, which were written by M. de Mirabeau himſelf, at the æra of the opening of the States-General; they naturally form a preface to this work, ſince they contain a hiſtory of what

was

was *thought*, on the eve, and on the birth-day of that aſſembly, whoſe memorable acts, particularly the firſt, will obtain the bleſſings of the French, and the admiration of the world.

The genuine merit of theſe three articles is moreover evinced, by thoſe wretched orders of council, which forbade their publication, to the great ſcandal of juſtice and of common ſenſe.

But *juſtice, common ſenſe, and miniſters of ſtate* were then what they had ever been; three things perfectly diſtinct, and ſo very hoſtile to one another, that time, which reconciles all things, could but ſeldom exhibit to us the conſoling ſpectacle of their union.

Account

Account of what paſſed at Verſailles, on the 2d of May, 1789.

"BEFORE we ſpeak of the ceremony which preceded the opening of the States-General, we think we ought to devote a few lines to the preſentation, which took place on Saturday the 2d of May. Not that we deſign to enlarge upon affairs of mere etiquette; there are publications enough, which give a very accurate account of thoſe unimportant objects, and we do not imagine that details of that kind, are what the public expects from us.

"We ſhall confine ourſelves, then, to mentioning, that, after being ſucceſſively aſſembled in the hall of Hercules, the deputies of the three orders were admitted to the king; thoſe of the clergy and the nobility

bility were admitted into the king's cloſet, thoſe of the commons into the hall of Louis XIV.

" Nothing remarkable paſſed there; we were ſtruck, however, with the little ſolemnity obſerved in a preſentation, which ought certainly to have been dignified, with the want of regularity, with the difficulties, the delays, occaſioned by an inaccurate liſt of the bailiwicks and ſeneſchalties. We ſhall not notice the diſtinction of cuſtoms univerſally diſapproved, and too important in their political conſequences, not to be treated of ſeparately, when the National Aſſembly ſhall take cognizance of ſuch matters.

" One ſingularity there was, which gave riſe to obſervations equally unfavourable; and that was, the difference in the mode

mode of preſenting the three orders*. The commons felt themſelves hurt: ſeveral groupes were immediately formed. It was propoſed with ſome degree of vehemence, to carry, that very inſtant, a remonſtrance to the foot of the throne, and to repreſent to the king how afflicting were ſuch diſtinctions, to that portion of the three orders which was truly national.

" The opinion which prevailed was as follows: —The firſt ſenſation which the appearance of the commons ſhall excite in the king's breaſt, ought not to be a painful one; and ſuch muſt be the ſenſation occaſioned to a good prince, by the fear either of diſobliging, or of having diſobliged. Beſides, the preſentation is

* They were received in different apartments. Add to this, that both the folding-doors were thrown open for the clergy, and only one for the nobility.

purely

purely optional, and not at all obligatory or legal. The king in his own houſe, receives whom he pleaſes, and how he pleaſes. The code of etiquette hath been hitherto the ſacred fire, adored by men of the court and of the privileged orders; it does not become the nation to aſcribe to it the ſame importance. It is, when ſhe ſhall demand the abolition of all humiliating diſtinctions; and that the teſtimonies of reſpect allotted to the monarch, and which cannot be too great, ſince a people honours itſelf, in paying honours to its prince, may be uniform and univerſal; becauſe variations in that point are no longer a tribute of honour, but a ſymbol of ſlavery; then it is, that we may quote this recent inſtance of ſervile ceremonioufneſs. At preſent, we are only ſo many individuals, to whom the proviſional

ſional legiſlator hath not yet opened his lips. What, gentlemen! when it ſhall be lawful for us to ſpeak, ſhall we not have objects of more conſequence to occupy our attention, than the names of the halls and ſtair-caſes, through which we have been conducted by the Maſter of the Ceremonies?

" And now let us relate an incident of another kind, and which we conſider as a real victory obtained for the popular cauſe.

" An irregular deputation, nominated in Provence by that part of the nobility who are willing neither to contribute to the public expences, nor to admit of a reformation in the ſtates of that province, had been put upon the liſt of the Grand Maſter of the Ceremonies, in order to

have the honour of being preſented to the king, as conſtituting the deputation from the nobility of Provence. The king refuſed to receive it; and admitted the legal deputation only, which had been appointed by the ſeneſchalties *.

" This event is worthy of notice, as it in ſome meaſure determined beforehand the excluſion of theſe pretended deputies, who might have obſtinately traverſed the operations of the people; for *the Poſſedans-fiefs* went ſo far as to enter a previous

* The deputies of Provence, who arrived at Verſailles on the firſt of May, apprehenſive that the eight pretended deputies of *the Poſſedans-fiefs* might, by their intrigues, obtain permiſſion to be preſented to the king as deputies, addreſſed a letter to him in terms of great reſpect, but great energy, for the purpoſe of preventing the preſentation of the pſeudo-deputies.

proteſt

proteſt againſt whatever might be done by the aſſembly of the ſtates-general *."

Account of what paſſed at Verſailles on May 4th, 1789.

"THE ceremony of the proceſſion of the deputies was conducted with very great ſolemnity. The deputies of the three orders, or rather the repreſentatives of the nation, attended the king at the church of Notre-Dame de Verſailles, where that Prince was received with acclamations, which, doubtleſs, are an earneſt of the

* After this paragraph, in the original, follows a long account of the diſputes in Provence, between the nobles poſſeſſing fiefs, and the *fiefleſs* nobility, the latter being refuſed admittance into the provincial aſſembly, by the former. I omit this account, as unintereſting to Engliſh readers. W.

recompence which is due to what he is doing for the welfare of his people.

" From Notre-Dame they all repaired to the church of St. Louis, the commons in a body, the nobility and the clergy following them, and the king and the royal family bringing up the rear.

" Here all the pomp of royalty, and of the court, was diſplayed.

" Divine ſervice was performed. After the goſpel, the biſhop of Nancy aſcended the pulpit. *Religion is the ſtrength of kingdoms*; *religion is the ſole and never-failing ſource of their proſperity:* ſuch was the diviſion of his diſcourſe.

" It was prolix, and appeared to conſiſt of ſhreds tacked together, without ideas, without ſtyle, without effect. It was quite another ſort of eloquence, quite another ſort of inſpiration, in a word, quite another order of things, that we had expected

pected in this auguſt aſſembly. Every common-place topic, from the baptiſm of Clovis to the illneſs of Louis the Well-beloved * at Metz, and from declamations againſt luxury down to railing againſt philoſophy, found room in this extraordinary ſermon. It was but too plain, that the orator was not perfectly ſatisfied with himſelf, that he had neither plan nor fixt object, and that he entirely miſtook the juncture.

" There was one paſſage which met with conſiderable applauſe. The point related to the operations of the treaſury, to the wretchedneſs experienced by the country parts of the kingdom, to the condition of the peaſantry. The orator concluded a rhetorical amplification with theſe words: *And it is in the name of a good king, of a monarch juſt and tender-hearted, that thoſe abominable extortioners practiſe*

* The late king.

ſuch barbarities. The church reſounded with the approbation of the commons."

" Another ſtroke is worthy of obſervation. FRANCE, THY WILL IS SUFFICIENT! The whole ſermon ſhould have been an explanation of that happy text.

" The frequent panegyrics on the king were much commended; but they might have been brought in better, and delivered with more felicity of expreſſion.

" The apoſtrophe to the queen, *Daughter of the Cæſars, rival and confidante of the beneficence of her auguſt ſpouſe!* might have been more oratorical, and leſs awkwardly introduced.

" This diſcourſe, like our modern tragedies, was entirely compoſed of hemiſticks: never was there a finer opportunity for a diſplay of eloquence, and never was ſuch an opportunity ſo completely neglected."

Account

Account of what paſſed at Verſailles on the 5th of May, 1789.

" AT length, on this day, the opening of the ſtates-general took place.

" Notice had been given to the deputies to repair to the hall at eight o'clock. They waited a long time, in a dark and narrow corridor, before the buſineſs of calling over the names was begun; and, really, they looked more like a crowd of merchants upon 'Change, than deputies in the veſtibule of the National Aſſembly.

" In calling over the names, the order of the bailiwicks in 1614 was followed. It were difficult to put the patience of the deputies to a more indiſcreet and fatiguing trial; and one might readily be tempted to imagine, that it required ſome inge-

nuity to deviſe a form ſo capricious, ſo complicated, ſo diſguſting.

" The coup d'œil of the hall was ſuperb. The deputies were not ſeated until a quarter before twelve, and the king made his appearance almoſt immediately after. He was received with loud applauſe. The queen placed herſelf beſide him, but not under the canopy, on a ſeat ſomewhat lower than the throne; the royal family and the king's attendants ſurrounded them.

" The king read a diſcourſe, in which he expreſſed much purity of ſentiment, and manifeſted paternal intentions. He was ſeveral times interrupted by acclamations; and this ſort of interruption appeared excuſable, and even ornamental, on account of its ſincerity.

" The keeper of the ſeals ſpoke for a conſiderable

conſiderable time; but three fourths of the aſſembly did not hear one word he ſaid.

" The director-general of the finances then read a volume, which was far from being a ſmall one. The king, in finiſhing his diſcourſe, had declared, that this miniſter ſhould lay before us an account of the condition of the finances; and thus were we deprived of the pretence, and even of the means of diſputing the word of the director-general, who was not entitled to ſpeak in the ſtates-general, without ſpecial permiſſion, ſince the chancellor, or the officer ſupplying his place, is the only commiſſioner of the king who ſits in that aſſembly. M. Necker ſpoke for three hours, and more.

" It were imprudent to attempt giving an account of a ſpeech of ſuch great length,

length, without having it before one's eyes *.

" There were certainly ſome very beautiful details in it. But intolerable tediouſneſs, innumerable repetitions, trifles uttered with pomp, unintelligible obſervations, opinions, and propoſitions, compoſed by far the greater part of it; not a principle, not one invulnerable aſſertion, not a ſingle reſource that might be expected from a ſtateſman, not even one grand expedient becoming a financier, no plan of reſtoration, although ſuch had been announced, no real *baſis of ſtability*, albeit this was one of the diviſions of the diſ-

* In this third article, I have retrenched ſeveral paragraphs, containing obſervations on various particulars of the above-mentioned ſpeech; they are leſs brilliant and leſs intereſting than thoſe which I have ſelected. W.

courſe;

courſe; and how ſhould a man, who dares not talk of the conſtitution, create, and, above all, conſolidate another order of things?

"His auditors were intoxicated with eagerneſs to applaud him, and they did applaud him till they were ſatiated.

"If it could be rendered conſiſtent with decorum to beſtow applauſe in a legiſlative aſſembly, there was one little bit which ſeemed to merit ſuch an honour. It was that relative to bankruptcy: the director-general gave us the ſtrongeſt and moſt honourable aſſurances, that there was no room for apprehenſion; and it were a grand ſource of conſolation and ſecurity, if the means indicated by the miniſter, did not, for the moſt part, wound public credit, and endanger punctuality of payment.

"M. Necker moreover declared, that the

the king had recommended to him to give his ſentiments in his name, *leſs as ſovereign, than as the guardian of the intereſts of the nation.*

" Let us hope that the miniſter of the finances will at length underſtand, that it is now no longer time to purſue unſteady courſes; that the current of public opinion is irreſiſtible; that, if it do not aid him, it will ſink him; that the reign of intrigue, like that of aſtrology*, is at an end; that cabal will periſh at his feet, if he prove faithful to his principles, and will accompliſh his rapid downfal, if he depart from them; that, ſtrong in an unheard-of popularity, he hath nothing now to dread but the deſertion of his own cauſe; and that if, in the ſituation in which the kingdom is plunged, an indefatigable patience

* Charlataniſme.

be

be neceſſary, an inflexible ſteadineſs is no leſs ſo.

" Let us hope that the repreſentatives of the nation will henceforward entertain a more dignified idea of their functions, of their miſſion, of their character; that they will not conſent to act the part of enthuſiaſts, at any price, and upon every occaſion; that, finally, inſtead of exhibiting themſelves to Europe, in the light of ſchool-boys juſt eſcaped from the ferula, and intoxicated with joy, becauſe they are promiſed a week's holidays, they will ſhew themſelves as men, and, as men, the flower of a nation, which, in order to be the firſt on earth, requires nothing but a conſtitution *.

* After admiring theſe paragraphs of Mirabeau, ſo eloquent, ſo full of wiſdom, can our readers forbear exclaiming, in the words of his friend and editor,

tor, "The loſs which France, which the world hath ſuſtained, is immenſe, irreparable* !" The iſſue of revolutions often depends on a ſingle citizen: *Thebes* roſe and fell with *Epaminondas*. It were not altogether an ill-founded aſſertion, to ſay, that the French committed an important miſtake, in ſo ſoon diſſolving the firſt aſſembly, or, at leaſt, in not re-electing the ſame men who had compoſed it. The impulſe communicated to the original members, could not eaſily be transferred to their ſucceſſors. It was ſomething, to have been the fathers of the young conſtitution, to have hung over its cradle, to have aſſiſted its infant efforts, and contracted for it that στοργη, that natural affection, which is the ſtrongeſt of all ties, and the moſt durable. It was ſomething to have known *Mirabeau*, to have been nouriſhed by his inſtruction, to have been animated by his example, to have liſtened to him when his words made "their hearts burn within them."—I am afraid that thoſe legiſlators, in their anxiety to avoid a new ſpecies of deſpotiſm, have done—what I hope they may never have reaſon to repent. W.

* See the preface to the firſt volume.

DECEMBER 10, 1789.

First Speech of M. de MIRABEAU, *in support of his motion for eſtabliſhing a gradual progreſſion in the elections to public offices.*

THE buſineſs relative to the municipalities was now finiſhed, and the aſſembly, by repeated demonſtrations of applauſe, had evinced to its committee of conſtitution, how well ſatisfied it was with their labours and their zeal.

MIRABEAU.

" THE propoſition which I have the honour to ſubmit to you, appears to me to contain an eſſential ſafe-guard of that conſtitution, which at this moment we are labouring to eſtabliſh. The reception

which you have afforded to moral conſiderations, induces me to imagine, that your attention is ever obtainable, when matters of legiſlation are preſented to you in that light.

" In the motion which I am laying before you, the queſtion is, whether it be expedient to ſubject to a gradual progreſſion, the members of the different departments of the civil adminiſtration? You perceive, gentlemen, that I have not been ſeduced by an ambition to become the parent of new and untried notions: it is in the practice of the beſt regulated, the beſt eſtabliſhed ſtates, that I have diſcovered traces of this law; but neither its antiquity, nor its ſimplicity, will be, in your eyes, a reaſon for rejecting it. It appears to me admirably adapted to that conſtitution, which is the work of this aſſembly,

and

and to bind the ſeveral parts of it together.

" Had we not laid down equality as a fundamental law, it might perhaps be objected, that it is militating againſt the prejudices of certain individuals, to commence the career of office with a ſubaltern poſt; but, gentlemen, it behoves us to take heed, that this equality which we have ſanctioned for a law, be not conſidered as an idle chimæra; it behoves us to take care, that it be traced, and retraced, through every branch of the conſtitution; that it become a principle which cannot be deſtroyed; and, as a conſequence of our political eſtabliſhments, that manners, cuſtoms, ſentiments, ſhould bear relation to the laws, as the laws relate to the model of reaſon and to the nature of things. If we neglect the ſecret cauſes of

this concord, if we omit to place man in a ſtate of harmony with the laws, we ſhall have formed a beauteous viſion of philoſophy, but we ſhall not have formed a conſtitution. The fundamental rules of good government are obvious; but to connect thoſe rules ſo well with the execution, that obedience to the law may flow from the law itſelf, and inure the citizen to the yoke of law, by all the force of concurrent habits, is going far beyond philoſophy, it is attaining the object of the legiſlator.

"Is not a gradual progreſs indicated by nature herſelf, in all her works, by the human mind in all its operations, by experience in all her maxims, as the progreſs to which the eternal Author of all beings hath thought it good and fitting to ſubject us? Politics are a ſcience; adminiſtration is a

ſcience

ſcience and an art: but government embraces every thing that is great in human nature: the ſcience, on which depends the deſtiny of ſtates, is a ſecond religion, both from its importance and its depth.

" Should, then, the moſt difficult of all arts, be the only one which we ought not to ſtudy? Muſt we look upon it in the ſame light in which we conſider games of hazard, which one never attempts to learn, becauſe they depend upon combinations beyond the reach of our ſagacity? Muſt we reaſon upon politics, in a different mode from that, in which we reaſon upon all the other occupations of human life?

" If experience be not acquired but by degrees, if ſhe extend her ſphere by little and little, if the progreſs of nature be to riſe in gradation from the ſimple to the compound, both nature and reaſon mean, that we ſhould paſs through the moſt ſim-

ple functions of adminiſtration, before we arrive at thoſe which are moſt complicated; that we ſhould ſtudy the laws in their effects, and even in their action, before we obtain permiſſion to reform them, and to dictate new laws; that, in fine, we ſhould undergo a kind of trial, which removes all ſuſpicion of incapacity or corruption, before we may be promoted to the great aſſembly of the nation *.

"I am now going to offer, in ſupport of this ſyſtem, ſome obſervations more particularly, and to anſwer a ſpecious objection.

"Should you decree, gentlemen, that it ſhall be indiſpenſable to have twice obtained the ſuffrages of the people, as a

* Something like this might remove the complaint in this kingdom, that too many of our ſenators aſſume that important character, while freſh from the birch of Eton and Weſtminſter. W.

member

member of ſome adminiſtrative aſſembly, or ſome tribunal, in order to become eligible into the national aſſembly, you would ſtamp a double value upon elections of every kind, you would reduce thoſe who look forward to offices, to the fortunate neceſſity of depending, from the very outſet of their career, upon the eſteem and goodwill of their fellow-citizens.

" I will be bold to ſay, that you would accompliſh a revolution in the habits and manners of youth, who, at preſent, proceed from frivolity to corruption, from corruption to inſignificance. The national elections would no longer be run away with, by cabal, by family-influence, by thoſe prejudices invariably but too much favoured, in conſtitutions the moſt free; you would ſeem to ſay, by the decree

which I propoſe: Whoever you be, do not flatter yourſelf that you ſhall carry every point, without having previouſly earned your honours by buſineſs and by ſervices; you ſhall not advance, unleſs by juſtifying, at every ſtep, the opinion of the public concerning you; you ſhall be weighed in the balance of experience, and unceaſingly compared with your rivals. Intereſt may open the gates to you; but, while men who are as good as you, are ſlowly mounting every ſtep of this inſtructive ladder, an indulgence miſchievous to your own talents*, ſhall not lift you to

* Excellent!—How frequently do we ſee a ſtripling hurried, by his injudicious family, into Parliament, where

" He ſtruts and frets his hour upon the ſtage,
" And then is heard no more;"

and who, had he been kept a little longer, might probably have riſen to eminence. W.

the

the ſummit, without your having given ſome pledge for ſo much confidence from the nation.

" Again, gentlemen: ſuch a law would become a noble mean of preventing the degeneration of a claſs of men, who, in every part of the globe (with ſome few exceptions, which are therefore the more honourable), ſeem to be abaſed in the moral order, in proportion as they are elevated in that of civil ſociety.

" The ſecond motive, which, I declare, attracts me irreſiſtibly towards the ſyſtem of gradation, is, the neceſſity for rendering every public commiſſion intereſting and honourable, for diffuſing an emulation of honour and virtue throughout the municipalities, for enhancing the value of popular ſuffrages, even when they confer only a ſubaltern employment.

" You will then no longer have any cauſe to fear, that the municipalities ſhould be diſdained by ſome, as ſituations beneath their acceptance, dreaded by others, as offices of fatigue and *ennui*, abandoned to a few candidates, who, deſtitute of all merit, of all ability, of all perſonal conſequence, would in a little time make them cheap: for it frequently happens, that employments owe all their value, in the eyes of men, to the idea formed of thoſe who ſeek for, or who occupy them.

" You know, gentlemen, that there is no poſt in ſociety, be it ever ſo inconſiderable, which cannot confer luſtre upon him who is without any, nor of ever ſo little profit, which preſents not a reſource, to the man who is unprovided. But we muſt exalt the municipalities, above the reach

reach of the ambition and intereſts of candidates of this deſcription.

" If the Romans had not concentred every thing within the walls of Rome, had they imparted a greater degree of ſplendour to the municipal adminiſtrations, had they made them the firſt ſtep in the ladder of public honours, they would not have been obliged to make laws of reſtraint and rigour, in order to compel the inhabitants of the provincial towns to act in burthenſome capacities. Thoſe laws are yet in being; they bear witneſs to the errors of the maſters of the world.

Let us avoid theſe errors; let us cheriſh our provinces; let us there diffuſe a radiance round every employment, aſſigned by the ſuffrage of our country. Let us annihilate that unhappy prejudice, which, upon the ruins of our ancient diſtinctions, would

would infallibly erect diſtinctions of another kind; which, upon the wreck of the claſſes and the orders, would create new claſſes, new orders, deriving their exiſtence from the elections themſelves, inevitable diſſenſions amongſt the municipalities, the adminiſtrations of department, and the national aſſembly. We ſhall have done our duty but by halves, ſhould we neglect to take away this dangerous reſource from pride. But, we ſhall eſtabliſh a kind of brotherhood amongſt all the public functions, ſhould the leaſt important of thoſe functions be made a neceſſary ſtep to elevation; if the higheſt be connected, by indiſpenſable tranſitions, with the lower degrees of office; ſhould all public honours reſemble a pure ſtream, diſtributed through different channels, but running one into another, perpetually

limpid, and, what is beſt of all, perpetually the ſame. This filiation of employments would produce another effect, no leſs "devoutly to be wiſhed*;" the ambition of men would become, even in places of the loweſt conſequence, a ſecurity for the zealous execution of their duty. How powerful is that legiſlator, who hath diſcovered the ſecret of giving this moral direction to the paſſions, who hath ſucceeded in ſhewing the citizens their intereſt in their probity, who hath the happy talent of uſing their predominant inclinations, as ſo many mechanic powers for elevating the law †! Whatever function a perſon exerciſes, when it is only a tranſitory ſtate of probation, in which his abilities, his integrity, are appreciated, with a view to his promotion to more important

* Non moins avantageux.

† Pour les leviers de la loi.

poſts,

poſts, from that moment you may rely on his unwearied attention to conduct himſelf irreproachably, and to conciliate the eſteem of his fellow-citizens.

" You have framed wiſe regulations for ſecuring the reſponſibility of every public officer; but to puniſh, to overawe, to reſtrain by dint of fear, is doing little: inſtead of whetting the ſubtilty and fatal induſtry of men, to counteract the laws by eluding them, we ſhould fix their obſervation upon the motives, which, penetrating to the bottom of the heart, render obedience both agreeable and eaſy. Severe laws have no other effect, than to force from us a deceitful and degenerate ſubmiſſion: but honour, placed as a depoſit in the ſuffrages of the people; but hope, dexterouſly managed from poſt up to poſt, and from function up to function;

tion *; but ambition, invited to deſerve every thing, where, before, ſhe uſurped every thing,—theſe, gentlemen, are ſecret ſprings, the power of which is proportioned to the obſtacles to be ſurmounted, ſprings ſo tempered, that liberty herſelf muſt periſh, ere that temper can be deſtroyed †.

"I reſt with confidence upon an authority, reſpectable in the eyes of every one, who is a friend to the public good. The immortal author ‡ of the Social Contract hath, on very many occaſions, be-

* De place en place, et de fonction en fonction.

† Des reſſorts qui ont la trempe indeſtructible de la liberté.

‡ Rouſſeau. A great man, had he confined himſelf to politics and romances, and forborne to trifle with Chriſtianity. W.

ſtowed

ſtowed the higheſt praiſes on the ſyſtem of gradation, which I have the honour to lay before you. In the glorious days of Rome, ſays he, they paſſed through the prætorſhip, in order to arrive at the conſulate. Integrity, adds the ſame author, could not be carried to a higher pitch, than it was amongſt the quæſtors of the Roman armies, ſince the quæſtorſhip was the firſt ſtep towards attaining the curule magiſtracies.

" It will not be uſeleſs to obſerve, that, in the ſyſtem of gradation, offices, otherwiſe obſcure, become ennobled by the perſpective of thoſe which are more elevated: men naturally mount upwards to the level of their hopes. Would you animate every portion of the kingdom; would you dignify even the meaneſt employments; let ſervices be the only road to advancement,

and

and let every public ſtation be preparatory to ſome other.

" But, it will be ſaid, we are going to treſpaſs on the freedom of elections. We have laid it down as a principle, that they ought to depend on confidence alone, and we are going to preſcribe limits to confidence.—I do not believe, gentlemen, that this objection is well founded.

" To fix on a certain meaſure of fortune, or on a certain degree of birth, and ſet it up as the condition of eligibility, is ſtriking at all thoſe who belong not to this league, is pronouncing their excluſion, is diſinheriting them of their natural right; but, to attach to the progreſs of promotion rules which equally extend to all, which leave to all the ſame rights, the ſame hopes, which are pointed againſt privileges in favour of equality, is not wounding the

principle,

principle, it is acting as its protector and guardian.

" What, then? ſhall the unlimited principle of the freedom of election, extend to the condemnation of thoſe very laws, which we have adopted from free ſtates, for the purpoſe of ſecuring the tranſition of employments, of compelling the renovation of them, after a certain number of years! Shall this principle condemn the laws, which fix the age of majority civil and political! But if the object of the law hath been, to be aſſured of the experience and judgment of thoſe who aſpire to public offices, ſince judgment and experience depend leſs on length of life, than on the uſe that one hath made of it, the requiring a noviciate, in order to become eligible into the legiſlative body, is entering thoroughly into the ſpirit of that law.

" I be-

"I beſeech you, gentlemen, to make, with reſpect to confidence, an obſervation peculiar to a repreſentative government, ſuch as ours.

"We are elected by a ſingle department, and we become the repreſentatives of the whole kingdom. We are not even elected by all the citizens of a department; but by a ſmall number of delegates from amongſt them.

"Hence, in my opinion, reſults a truth, which cannot be controverted, and that is, that the confidence which the legiſlative body is to enjoy, were precarious, if means were not diſcovered of doubling it, in ſome meaſure.

"Obſerve how much broader a baſis you are giving to confidence, by making it thus bear upon the ſyſtem of gradual election; we ſhall have nothing to apprehend from the firſt choice of ſeduced elec-

tors, of electors impoſed upon, perhaps corrupted; but every choice they make ſhall be juſtified beforehand, by the proofs ſhewn by the candidate, both of his talents and his virtues. Such elections are likely to be by ſo much the more popular, as a greater number of citizens will have participated, directly or indirectly, in the appointment of the members of the National Aſſembly.

"The electors may then ſay to their fellow-citizens: Our choice hath been directed by yours; we do not preſent you with an unknown man. His ſervices have gone before him like a herald *, and the voice of the public hath recommended him to our favour.

"As for the provinces, they will, by theſe means, give one another mutual ſe-

* Il eſt précédé de ſes ſervices.

curities,

curities, that neither cabal, nor intereſt, nor complaiſance, nor venality, nor popular caprice, nor ſudden whim, ſhall abandon the fate of the empire to corrupt or ſilly repreſentatives. Thus ſhall the provinces experience a more profound calm, more perfect tranquillity, upon the faith of public reaſon; the ſovereign decrees ſhall meet with more reſpect, and moral opinion ſhall become their beſt authority.

"To eſtabliſh confidence on a more ſolid foundation, is not making an attempt to injure her: no objection, then, ſhould be ſtarted againſt the ſyſtem of gradation, upon the ground of one of its greateſt advantages.

"Should the moral and political conſiderations, which I have juſt now laid before you, determine you to ſanction this experimental and gradual progreſs, it will

be expedient to appoint a time at which it ſhall take place, and from which it ſhall be rigidly obſerved. To ordain that it ſhall commence immediately, were to deſire an impoſſibility; but in the ſpace of eight or ten years, the number of citizens who ſhall have paſſed through the municipalities, the tribunals, the departments, or this aſſembly, will form ſuch a fund of able candidates, as will preſent an immenſe field to the electors.

"I move you to come to the following reſolutions:

"1. That, from the firſt day of January, 1797, no perſon ſhall be capable of being elected member of the National Aſſembly, unleſs he have been honoured, at leaſt twice, with the ſuffrages of the people, as member of ſome adminiſtrative aſſemblies of department, of diſtrict, or of the

the municipalities; or unleſs he have filled, during three years at leaſt, an office of magiſtracy; or, in fine, unleſs he have been once already a member of the National Aſſembly.

" 2. From the year 1795, no perſon ſhall be elected member of the aſſemblies of department, unleſs he have already executed functions in the aſſemblies of diſtrict, or in the municipalities.

" 3. And, in order that the laws relating to theſe points, may not require too advanced an age in the candidate, every active citizen ſhall be eligible to municipal employments, as ſoon as he ſhall have attained the age of twenty-one years."

The aſſembly liſtened to this diſcourſe with a degree of attention, expreſſive of their opinion of the importance of a queſtion, at once ſo new and ſo intereſting.

However, as ſoon as the firſt article was read, the diſcontents manifeſted by ſome interrupted the reading of the remainder. M. de Mirabeau in vain declared, that the three articles compoſed but one. *You will have ſufficient time*, added he, *for demonſtrating their perverſe and wicked meaning**. It was not till after a conſiderable interval, that he finiſhed the reading of the decree, and that one could judge by the applauſe given, that the Aſſembly was at leaſt divided in opinion.

He had ſcarce deſcended from the tribune, when M. Barnave took his place.

"If," ſaid he, "in order to annihilate the conſtitution, at a ſingle blow, it were ſufficient to envelop, in ſome moral ideas,

* Theſe words are a ſtrong proof, that Mirabeau knew what weapons his enemies might employ againſt him.

and

and ſome ſcraps of erudition, principles the moſt oppoſite to the declaration of rights, and to our decrees, the member who ſpoke laſt might flatter himſelf that he had produced that effect upon you; but, fortunately, he hath armed you againſt the ſeduction of his eloquence; and often have we been obliged to ſeek for reaſon and the public good, amidſt that multitude of elegancies, with which he uſually embelliſhes his ſentiments. This neceſſity appears to-day in a manner ſtill more ſtriking."

And then M. Barnave attacked the motion upon theſe grounds:

1. It was contradictory to ſeveral decrees, and retarded for ſeveral years, the time appointed for admiſſion to public offices.

2. It tended to unite, in a ſmall number

of perſons, the municipal, adminiſtrative, and legiſlative powers.

3. Men, who, by their ſtudies, might have fitted themſelves for a place in the National Aſſembly, would find themſelves under the neceſſity of paſſing through employments, for which they were not at all adapted.

And, after having promulgated theſe three mighty motives, for reprobating the project, M. Barnave thus expreſſed himſelf:

" The concluſion which I am to draw, hath been already provided for me by the member who ſpoke laſt. I do not conceive, how any one can propoſe to a nation, to make a law which cannot be executed in leſs than ten years: I know not whether even that term would prove ſufficient. You will have occaſion, ſome year

year or other, for a national convention, for the purpoſe of rectifying the errours, which experience ſhall have ſhewn to exiſt in the conſtitution. I move you that the motion be adjourned to the time of that convention."

M. MIRABEAU.

" The member who ſpoke laſt, appears to have forgotten, that, though rhetoricians talk to anſwer the purpoſe of a day, the legiſlator's diſcourſe is directed to futurity. I aſk leave to reply to him; but, as I am ſummoned to attend the committee of ten*, I quit the aſſembly, in order to repair whither it commands me; and I requeſt that the debate be adjourned†."

The debate was adjourned.

Decem-

* Appointed to examine different plans of finance.

† In what, then, it will be aſked, conſiſts the fault of

DECEMBER 15, 1789.

The motion of Mirabeau, upon the ſyſtem of gradation, was the order of the day.

It

of this motion of Mirabeau ?—In this—Henceforward, ſomething more ſhall be requiſite, to entitle a candidate to be elected a legiſlator, than pronouncing from ſome tribune, or in the middle of the ſtreets, theſe grand words, PEOPLE, LIBERTY, EQUALITY, REGENERATION, SALVATION OF THE KINGDOM, ABHORRENCE OF TYRANTS. It ſhall be neceſſary to have proved, that the candidate loves the *people* for its ſake, and not for his own; that the prime object of his love, is the *liberty* of all, and not his own excluſively; that he cheriſhes *equality* by ſo much the more, as he never entertained a wiſh to be himſelf the head, or even the member of an imperious tribe, which ſeparates itſelf by proud diſtinctions from the reſt of the community*; that he poſſeſſes

* D'une caſte impérative et iſolée.—We have no ſuch word as *iſolated*, at leaſt in authors of good authority. W.

It had ſcarcely been mentioned, when M. Verchère called for the queſtion of adjournment.

M. Clermont-Tonnerre was for debating it.

M. Ræderer was of the ſame opinion.

" One of the reaſons," ſaid he, "upon which M. Mirabeau founds his motion, is to render reſpectable in the eyes of every citizen, ſuch offices as are the firſt ſtep in the ſcale of adminiſtration. Many, fitted to fill ſtations in the municipalities, will

poſſeſſes not only the courage, but likewiſe the ability, to co-operate in bringing about a *regeneration* which is indiſpenſable; that he hath the virtue to ſacrifice, to *the ſalvation of the kingdom*, his very ambition, nay, even his ſelf-love; that, in fine, he not only *abhors tyrants*, but that he likewiſe feels no tendency to become a tyrant himſelf.—It is evident, that all this is difficult to be proved, and doubtleſs, the eaſieſt way is, to ſtifle the difficulty of the proof.

deſpiſe

deſpiſe them, ſhould thoſe ſtations be ſeparated from the other public employments. When conſidering them as a ladder to the ſuperior poſts, they will immediately preſs forward to occupy them, although the effect of the motion is not to take place until the year 1797: conſequently, I am of opinion that the motion ought not to be adjourned.

M. Mirabeau the younger ſaid: What good citizen ſhould ſtand in need of the hope of arriving at ſuperior place, to prevail on him to fill a poſt where he can be uſeful to his country? Such a good citizen were an intriguing &c.

M. Duport was for the adjournment.

M. MIRABEAU.

" When I beheld a member mount the tribune, with a readineſs which I admired

as

as much as I well could, for the purpoſe of attacking, unpreparedly, a motion which I had the conſcience to meditate maturely, and which ſtood propped upon the opinion of Rouſſeau, that is, of the man who moſt reflected upon the ſtate of human affairs, I ſhould have needed only to repeat myſelf, in order to reply to him.

" I was ſummoned ſeveral times by one of your committees, and I deſired that the debate ſhould be adjourned.

" When I heard it propoſed, that the queſtion ſhould be adjourned to the year 1797, I thought that nothing more was meant than a ſtroke of pleaſant raillery: in fact, this is the firſt time that an attempt hath ever been made, to prevent legiſlators from extending their views into futurity.

" It hath already been obſerved, that, to form

form a conſtitution, is to labour for the time to come, is to foreſee, is to determine long beforehand, the manners, the opinions, the habitudes of a nation. If the law which I propoſe, be as the key-ſtone of the arch, if it connect the ſeveral parts by one common point of union, you ought not to defer ſanctioning it, although its execution be neceſſarily retarded. Imagine not that it remains even as a *pierre d'attente**: its influence will begin to operate immediately, both on thoſe who look forward to a ſhare in public buſineſs, who will not deſpiſe the municipal employments, and on the electors, who will confer, with a more ſcrupulous choice, ſuch offices as are moſt deſirable, and on

* A corner-ſtone left jutting out from a building, in order to be afterwards connected with another edifice.

the adminiſtrations themſelves, which will be looked upon as a ſtate of probation.

" The member who attacked my motion would be very much embarraſſed, were he aſked, whether, when only an enſign in the regiment wherein he diſtinguiſhed himſelf*, he never aſpired to the commiſſion which he hath at preſent the honour to bear. I know not for what deſcription of men it can be true, that emulation is the ſame with intrigue; I know not in what claſs of angelic beings, the deſire of doing good is the only deſire exiſting: ſuch perfection is not made for this world.

" I do not think it becoming the wiſdom and juſtice of the Aſſembly, to prevent me from anſwering objections, that have pro-

* Lorſqu'il ſervoit dans le premier grade où il portoit les armes avec diſtinction.

duced

duced an effect upon my motion, which I flatter myſelf I am able to deſtroy. If the adjournment be to any fixed period, I will not ſuffer a murmur to eſcape me; but if it be indefinite, I muſt ſay, that a law, which is ſanctioned by the authority of the firſt genius of the age, and which even its enemies acknowledge to have a very moral tendency, is treated with an indecorum, highly unworthy of this aſſembly.

"That I may enjoy the benefit of the order of the day, I aſk leave to anſwer the objections. Should I do it in ſuch a manner as to cruſh all further debate upon the ſubject *, you will pronounce your deciſion; ſhould the queſtion appear to you not ſufficiently explained, you will diſcuſs it, or you will adjourn it."

* D'une manière péremptoire.

The

The Aſſembly came to two reſolutions; firſt, to adjourn the motion, and then, to adjourn it indefinitely.

The honour of decreeing the moral propoſition of M. Mirabeau, is reſerved, then, for a ſecond legiſlature; let us hope that that legiſlature, will make it a point of conſcience and of zeal, to give it the full authority of law.

December 29, 1789.

On the morning of the 18th, the Aſſembly had taken cognizance of a letter addreſſed to M. Necker, by M. Tronchin, in the name of the city of Geneva.

In this letter, M. Necker was, in the firſt place, made acquainted with the penury of the Genevans, and, in the next, commiſſioned to offer to the National Aſ-

ſembly, in the name of the republic, a gift of nine hundred thouſand livres, to be paid out of the life-annuities of the year 1789.

M. *de Volney* had ſaid: "It is very evident, that the government of Geneva does not owe its exiſtence to the free conſent of the nation, but is merely ſupported by us as guarantees. If we may credit certain reports, which ſeem to merit our attention, this generoſity is far from being gratuitous. It is connected by ſome thread, which we may come at, with the guaranty juſt ratified in favour of the party of the Genevan ariſtocrates, in oppoſition to the intereſts of the republic. This Aſſembly, by accepting a pretended gratuity, would appear, and it ought not to appear, to protect engagements contrary to every principle of liberty."

In conſequence of theſe judicious obſervations,

ſervations, which were felt by every true friend to freedom, the queſtion, whether the nine hundred thouſand livres ſhould be accepted, had been adjourned.

On this day, M. *de Volney*, beginning the debate on the acceptation, read the following paragraph of a letter, which had been addreſſed to him by certain citizens of Geneva:

Extract of a letter from Meſſrs. Claviere, du Roveray, and Dumont, to M. Volney.

" We will not ſay that this gift, an-
" nounced by the Genevans as the effect
" of their particular regard for M. Necker,
" is, either the price of his civility, or a
" condition, without which the guaranty,
" granted to them by government, was
" not to hold good; but we affirm, as
" facts notorious in Geneva, that the laſt

" aſſurances given by M. Necker to the " magiſtrates of this city, with reſpect to " obtaining the guaranty, agree, in point " of time, with the invitation made to " them in his name, to intereſt themſelves " in *the patriotic contribution* :—that the " ſubſcriptions relative to that matter, " commenced almoſt at the ſame juncture; " —that they remained open, till the ar- " rival of the full powers, by virtue of " which the guaranty was ſigned ;—and " that it was then only, that the final re- " ſult of the ſubſcription was addreſſed to " that miniſter."

M. *de Volney* concluded with adviſing, that the offer ſhould be rejected.

M. *Toulongeon* ſaid : " Why ſhould it be ſuppoſed that the Genevans had any other motive, than that of contributing their ſhare towards the re-eſtabliſhment

of

of our finances, ſince their whole fortune is inſeparably connected with our proſperity, and our calamity would bring on their ruin?"

MIRABEAU.

"This cannot be conſidered as a gratuity; their letter is ſufficient to teach us the true value of their motives: I will not at preſent talk of probabilities, I will only comment upon what they themſelves have written: you ſee there but too much to confirm you in that diſtruſt, which, by an inſtinct of liberty, you felt at the very moment when this offering was announced to you.

"What is the nature of this gift? It is not a patriotic contribution. The Genevans have long enjoyed the honour of having a country of their own. It is an

act of their generoſity, it is a philanthropic ſuccour, it is, ſay they, *a precious opportunity which ought to be ſeized, becauſe it may never come again* *, of teſtifying their *reſpect*, their *devotion*, their *gratitude to a beneficent king, to a generous nation, who have, at all times, intereſted themſelves in the welfare of the republic.* It is not here, then, that we find that contribution, which is the object of our decree; and nothing can be leſs like even the quarter of their revenues, than theſe nine hundred thouſand livres which are offered to us, ſince Geneva poſſeſſes, in France, annuities to the amount of at leaſt twelve or fifteen millions.

" Who are the donors? another conſideration, which goes beyond mere curioſity. They who have ſigned that let-

* Une occaſion precieuſe et unique à ſaiſir.

ter,

ter, are preciſely Genevan ariſtocrates, that is, the very perſons who have indefatigably endeavoured to ſuſpend the ſword of foreign interference, over the heads of their fellow-citizens. Yes, gentlemen, they are all ariſtocrates, two excepted, who belong to the popular party, and who may have been impoſed upon, as a member who hath already ſpoken, remarked. But, furthermore, they are all, without exception, members of that government, of that unremovable body which is no longer elected by the people, and which, in 1782, took poſſeſſion of all the rights of the ſovereign aſſembly, like unnatural children who would bar out* their father, with a view of uſurping his eſtate.

"The letter of the donors informs us,

* Interdire.

that the perſons who have ſigned it are members of a committee, appointed by the ſubſcribers to forward to you their gift.

" I cannot perceive the effect of chance, in the compoſition of this committee; but I perceive in it the intentions of the government, which, without acting of itſelf, is deſirous of being confounded with its members; and I perceive them ſtill better, in the ſolemnity of the gift, in the intervention of the republic's agent, and in that of the miniſter of the finances.

" And at what juncture is this gift preſented to you? It agrees as preciſely, in point of time, with the guaranty which they obtained, as if it were the price and the compenſation for that guaranty. Theſe ſuſpicions are corroborated, when we find, in the letter of the donors, that,

far

far from being the ſurplus of abundance, this preſent is a ſacrifice ſnatched from indigence and neceſſity. Singular generoſity! What? the citizens of Geneva ſee around them a people, connected with them by the ſtrongeſt relations, by the ties of blood, by the ſocial and patriotic affections; they are witneſſes of their want, they themſelves draw us a lugubrious picture of it; and, at a time when their beneficence can and ought to be exerciſed in favour of their brethren, they prefer ſcattering it abroad, diſpatching it to diſtant places *, preceded by the trumpet of renown; they offer us a magnificent preſent ſet in miſery †. They forget, that our delicacy would induce us rather to offer relief to them, and that at

* De l'envoyer au loin.

† Dans le cadre de la miſère.

leaſt

leaſt we might ſay: Arouſe the languid arts, ſupport your manufactures, invite plenty into your laps, before you dream of offering us preſents, which humanity would not ſuffer us to accept, unleſs with this condition, of ſhowering them back with uſury upon your famiſhing fellow-citizens*.

[*Here thunders of applauſe from every quarter of the Aſſembly.*]

" Every one of theſe reflections originates in the very letter of the donors: but what events ſhould I have to deſcribe, were I to ſound the depths of that *beneficence*, of that *intereſt which we have at all times taken in the welfare of the republic*, and which animate the gratitude of the Genevan ariſtocrates! It were neceſ-

* *Bravo!*—Que pour les reverſer avec uſure ſur les indigens de votre patrie.

ſary

ſary to diſplay before you the citizens of Geneva, in 1766, wreſtling with the pride and deſpotiſm of M. de Choiſeul, who, in order to tread them down, and puniſh them for their noble love of liberty, wreaked his vengeance on them by menaces, by laying their commerce under an interdict, by a *cordon* of troops which ſhut them up within their walls. It were neceſſary to repreſent to you Geneva, in 1782, beſieged, uſurped, the defenders of the people baniſhed, the people itſelf diſarmed, treated like a conquered enemy, ſubjected to the double yoke of military and civil deſpotiſm, and five hundred citizens of Geneva fleeing with horror from their oppreſſed country. Such, gentlemen, are the ſervices which we have done the Genevan ariſtocrates; ſuch the benefits for which they are now repaying

us.

us. But the moment is not yet come, for agitating the queſtion reſpecting national guaranties, for examining whether we ſhall leave miniſters the power of entangling France, in the internal diſturbances of other countries, of ſowing the ſeeds of future difficulties, wars, expences, burthenſome to us, abſurd in themſelves, and odious to all our neighbours.

" That queſtion will be brought before you by the Genevans themſelves, who, at the very time when their government was ſoliciting the guaranty, began to unite, yet ſlowly, for the purpoſe of aſking your leave to be as free in their own country, as you are deſirous of being here. You will then, gentlemen, have an opportunity of knowing what theſe guaranties, theſe pretended benefits, have done both for Geneva and France.

" To

" To Geneva, they have proved a copious and continual ſource of troubles and diſtractions, from the year 1738.

" To France, they have produced a ſeries of blunders, of faults, of acts which diſhonoured the nation, were it poſſible for us to be accountable for what our miniſters, or their dull commiſſaries, did, in the name of the nation, when the nation was conſidered as nothing.

" This hateful labyrinth of intrigues and injuries, will, ſooner or later, be ſubmitted to your inſpection; and it will be for you to decide, whether ſuch guaranties be conſiſtent with morality and the rights of nations.

" It is for you now to eſtimate the magnitude and the nature, of the gift which is preſented to you, and the purity of the motives which led to ſuch an offering.

" I move

" I move you to come to the following reſolutions:

" That the preſident ſhall return for anſwer to the firſt miniſter of the finances:
" That the National Aſſembly, deeply
" affected by the diſtreſſed ſtate of the
" arts, the commerce, and the manufac-
" tures of Geneva, and likewiſe by the
" extravagantly high price of corn, men-
" tion of which is made in the letter
" communicated by the miniſter, is of
" opinion, that the nine hundred thouſand
" livres, which are offered to it in that
" letter, would be applied with more pro-
" priety, if employed in relieving the Ge-
" nevans themſelves, and that, conſe-
" quently, it hath come to a reſolution
" not to accept them."

[*Freſh applauſe bore witneſs, that M. de Mirabeau had completely met the opinion of the Aſſembly.*]

retfA

After having heard the Abbé Maury, whoſe ſentiments coincided with thoſe of M. Mirabeau, it was reſolved, moſt unanimouſly, that the offer of the Genevans ſhould be rejected, and that the preſident ſhould communicate the ſaid reſolution to the firſt miniſter of the finances.

January 22, 1790.

Speech upon the motion for expelling the Abbé Maury, who had made uſe of expreſſions offenſive to the Aſſembly.

During a debate on a report made by the committee of finances, upon ſome buſineſs relating to the liquidation of the public debt, the Abbé Maury had behaved in ſuch a manner, as to incur the diſpleaſure of the Aſſembly. Without troubling

troubling the reader with the debate itſelf, and the ſeveral amendments propoſed, I take up the affair of the Abbé Maury at the following paragraph of the French editor.

The plan of the decree is read.

The Abbé Maury darts into the tribune, declaims againſt that part of the Aſſembly, which would fain, ſays he, obſtruct the verification of the debt (no ſoul had thought of it), and addreſſed it in theſe words *à la Brebeuf**: "I deſire that thoſe men, to whom nature hath refuſed the leaſt ſpark of courage, and to whom ſhe hath given no other recompenſe than ſhame, may anſwer me in this Aſſembly—".

Here the orator is interrupted, and, amidſt ſymptoms of diſapprobation the

* Some perſon, probably, whoſe ſtyle reſembled that of the Abbé.

moſt unequivocal, the motion for his expulſion is made and applauded.

M. MIRABEAU.

" The vexatious incident which troubles this debate, affords you an ample proof that choler is an evil counſellor: for the member who hath juſt had the misfortune to offend you, hath directly counteracted the ſucceſs of his opinion, which was actually triumphant, at the moment when he ſtood up as its defender. Let us imitate neither his violence, nor his want of dexterity. Let us be calm, ſince we are about to perform the office of judges. But, gentlemen, before I give my ſentiments, as to the conduct which it behoves you to purſue in the preſent caſe, allow me to requeſt the preſident, to ſtate exactly the point for deliberation."

Here the flame breaks out again with redoubled fury; one ſide of the hall calls for the expulſion of the Abbé Maury; M. Guillaume declares himſelf the author of the motion, and perſiſts in requiring, that the preſident be authorized to write to Péronne, to the conſtituents of the Abbé, for the purpoſe of requeſting them to recall their deputy.

Mirabeau wiſhes to be heard, but is oppoſed by M. Montlauſier, who takes upon him to foretell, that M. Mirabeau is about to make ſome very violent motion.

M. MIRABEAU.

" Had I not been interrupted by the member who ſpoke laſt, he might already have known, that it is more ſatisfactory*

* Plus ſimple.

to liſten than to divine, and that, in general, the trade of prophecy is far from being an unerring one. It is already evident, that I have not affronted the underſtanding* of this aſſembly, by deſiring the preſident ſhould ſtate the propoſition, upon which I was going to deliberate. In the firſt moments of that indignation, which ſo naturally ſeized the aſſembly, your ears were ſtruck, gentlemen, with the word *expulſion*; I ſaw ſtarted, on a ſudden, a grand queſtion of public right, which certainly is neither decided, nor reduced into proper form; and as, in this univerſal ferment, it might be prejudged in a manner highly mortifying, I have aſcended the tribune, in order to endeavour to prevent ſuch prejudication. It is ſo painful to riſe to ſpeak, when one hath no

* Deſſervi la raiſon.

opinion to give but what bears hard upon a colleague, that no other motive whatever ſhould have ſwayed me. But I conſidered it my duty, to warn the juſtice of this aſſembly, and to remind it, that, ere the expulſion of a member be decreed, it becomes us to inquire whether we poſſeſs the right, and that the preſent circumſtance is not favourable to a diſcuſſion of ſuch ſolemnity. A few moments have proved ſufficient to ſhew M. Guillaume, that it was more conformable to the principle, which at leaſt is not diſputed, to confine himſelf to a declaration of the preſumed incapacity of the Abbé Maury, by requeſting his conſtituents to nominate another deputy; and this very ſevere ſentence, gentlemen, you moſt unqueſtionably have a right to adopt.

" I would obſerve, however, that if the

the paſſionate behaviour of the Abbé Maury can neither be juſtified nor ſuffered, it yet carries with it a ſpecies of excuſe. Undoubtedly the Abbé Maury was not himſelf, when he ſpoke in a manner ſo injudicious. His culpable apoſtrophe was directed to no particular perſon, who can be named as the intended object. Had he meant it for the aſſembly at large, it were a kind of ſacrilegious phrenzy, which perhaps ought to ſubject him only to the puniſhment due to madmen. Had he named any of us, it would have been incumbent on you to procure ſatisfaction to the inſulted member; but nothing like this was the caſe. The fact committed by the Abbé Maury, was only a ſcandalous burſt of paſſion, which, in my opinion, merits only a chaſtiſement of ſimple diſcipline; and my advice, therefore, is, that

the Abbé Maury be cenſured, and that the cenſure be recorded on the journals. Sir [*addreſſing himſelf to M. de Montlauſier*], ſhould you have gueſſed at this concluſion?"

The Abbé Maury now aſcends the tribune, attempts to juſtify himſelf, but with an aukwardneſs very unconciliating; at length he calls upon M. Mirabeau, to mention in what particular *his mode of reaſoning had been abſurd, and his expreſſions injurious.*

M. MIRABEAU.

" I might decline ſpeaking of *the abſurdity* of the mode of reaſoning, ſince that is not the count upon which the Abbé Maury is indicted, and becauſe it appears to me, that every one is at full liberty, to talk as abſurdly as he can and as he pleaſes.

pleaſes. However, in order to anſwer the challenge juſt given me, I will ſay, that I thought it *an abſurdity*, to conclude that, becauſe the aſſembly was inclined to verify the *non-conſtituted* debt, it was not inclined to verify the debt which was conſtituted, and alſo, to make an outrageous declamation upon an imaginary opinion, which no perſon in this aſſembly had ſuggeſted.

" With reſpect to what I find *injurious* in the expreſſions of the Abbé Maury, I am ſorry that he compels me to mention them again; but I ſhall do it briefly, and with ſimplicity.

" Had the Abbé Maury confined himſelf to this part of what he uttered: *I deſire that thoſe men, to whom nature hath refuſed the leaſt ſpark of courage, and whom ſhe hath not even recompenſed by ſhame*, it

might be contended, that that was only a figure of rhetoric, inapplicable, and in a bad taſte; but theſe words, *that they may anſwer me*, even though one were to ſeparate them from the reſt, as he would fain do with theſe words, *in this aſſembly*, are a direct and pointed apoſtrophe, and, conſequently, it is utterly impoſſible to juſtify them. Now, we underſtood them ſo clearly, at leaſt in that part of the hall where I was ſeated, that we all cried out: *It is for the Abbé Maury alone, to aſk the queſtion and to anſwer it.*

" But, gentlemen, this whole debate is ſo auſtere, and ſo indignant*, that God forbid I ſhould prolong it by unneceſſary reflections. In my mind, it were for the intereſt of even the Abbé Maury himſelf, to curtail it, and I doubt that his apology,

* Si triſte et ſi faſtidieux.

adorned

adorned by *the roaring of rage**, will conduce to make my opinion be conſidered as too ſevere, an opinion in which I perſiſt."

The debate was lengthened out ſtill further; but, at laſt, it was reſolved, that the Abbé Maury ſhould be cenſured, and that the cenſure ſhould be recorded on the journals.

* The Abbé, amongſt other things which he had ſaid in his juſtification, had given vent to theſe expreſſions: *A man who mounts the tribune without any preparation, and who is inceſſantly interrupted by the roaring of rage*——Here he was overpowered by the clamours of the aſſembly.

APRIL 19, 1790.

Speech on the propoſition for annulling the imperative mandates, and for fixing the renewal of the Aſſembly, after completing the conſtitution.

The powers of ſome of the deputies were on the point of expiration, as their commiſſions were limited to a year.

It became neceſſary to provide againſt, to prevent, the diſorganization of the Aſſembly.

The committee of conſtitution propoſed to decree; 1. That the National Aſſembly could not be renewed, until the conſtitution were completed; 2. That the commiſſions of the deputies were null and void, with reſpect to the duration of the exiſting ſeſſion.

This propoſal found a violent opponent

in

in the Abbé Maury. But the Abbé Maury ſpoke for a long time, and ſaid nothing. The hackneyed argument, *that the deputies were the deputies of the bailiwicks, before they became thoſe of the nation*, and that, *conſequently*, they owed obedience to their conſtituents, was exhibited under a thouſand different forms, and, nevertheleſs, the friends of the Abbé Maury were the only members who conſidered it as concluſive.

MIRABEAU.

" I cannot, without the deepeſt indignation, hear ill-minded declaimers inceſſantly oppoſe the nation in the National Aſſembly, and make efforts to excite a ſort of rivalſhip between them; as if it were not by the exertions of the National Aſſembly, that the nation hath diſcovered, recovered, re-

re-acquired all her rights! as if it were not by the exertions of the National Aſſembly, that the French, until then an unconſtituted aggregation of diſunited tribes, are truly become a nation! as if, encompaſſed by the monuments of our labours, of our dangers, of our ſervices, we could become the objects of public ſuſpicion, and formidable to the liberties of the people! as if, while the eyes of the two worlds are fixed upon you, the fortunate enthuſiaſm* of a great revolution, the grand ſpectacle of your glory, the gratitude of ſo many millions, even the pride of a generous conſciouſneſs, which ſhame would not ſuffer to belie itſelf, were not a ſufficient pledge, for your fidelity, your patriotiſm, and your virtue!

* Le fanatiſme heureux.—*Fanatiſme* is a bad word to be applied in ſuch a ſenſe. W.

"A mem-

" A member who hath already ſpoken, hath, in combating with great art the ſyſtem of the committee, defined the national convention to be, a nation aſſembled by proxy *, for the purpoſe of giving itſelf a government. This definition is manifeſtly very inaccurate, or very incomplete. Eh! why might not a nation, which can form a convention for the purpoſe of giving itſelf a government, with equal reaſon form one, in order to change, to modify, to reform the exiſting government? Undoubtedly, the Abbé Maury will not deny that the French, aſſembled in convention, would not poſſeſs, for inſtance, the right of augmenting the royal prerogative.

" The ſame member hath aſked, how, from ſimple deputies of bailiwicks, we

* Une nation aſſemblée par ſes repréſentans.

were

were ſuddenly transformed into a national convention? I will anſwer him:—On the day, when, finding the hall, where by right we ſhould have aſſembled, ſhut up, ſurrounded, polluted by a foreſt of bayonets *, we ran to the firſt place which could receive us, and there took an oath to periſh, ſooner than ſuffer the then order of things to ſubſiſt; on that ſame day, if we were not one before, did we become a national convention. The deputies of the people formed a national convention, when deſpotiſm, by an act of frenzy truly ſacrilegious, attempted to hinder them from fulfilling their ſacred miſſion; they formed a national convention, for the purpoſe of putting an end to arbitrary power, and of defending, from all violence, the rights of the French nation.

* Fermée, heriſſée, ſouillée de baïonnettes.

You

You perceive, gentlemen, that I deſpiſe craft, that I diſdain all ſubtilties; it is not by metaphyſical diſtinctions, that I attack particular oaths, oaths taken indiſcreetly or raſhly, oaths of which the National Aſſembly will not judge, of which it does not become her to take cognizance. I will not even avail myſelf of all my advantages; I will not aſk whether, being commiſſioned to frame a conſtitution, we have not been empowered by that very circumſtance, to do every thing that might be neceſſary to the finiſhing, the eſtabliſhing, the fortifying that conſtitution; whether the inſtructions which gave in charge to us the *regeneration* of France, did not thereby confer on us unlimited powers, as to that object; whether the king himſelf have not pronounced this word *regeneration*, and thereby admitted all its conſequences;

ſequences; whether, in the circumſtances attending the revolution, and by which we have been agitated, we could, we ought to have interrogated our conſtituents, loſt in cowardly conſultations the invaluable time for action, and left our infant liberty to be ſtruck with a death's wound, in order to ſatisfy the ſcruples of the numerous hoſt of proſelytes, with which all eſtabliſhed authority is ſurrounded. I ſay, that, let our powers have been what they might, at the juncture, when, convoked by lawful authority, we aſſembled in one great body, they changed their nature on the 20th of June, becauſe that change was neceſſary to the ſalvation of our country; that, if they had need of any extenſion, they acquired it on that memorable day, when, wounded in our dignity, in our rights, in our duties,

ties, we bound ourſelves to provide for public ſafety, by the oath never to ſeparate, till the conſtitution ſhould be fixed upon the baſis of ſtability *.

" The wicked attempts of deſpotiſm, the perils which we have charmed †, the violence that we have ſubdued, are the titles by which we ſit here; they have been ſanctioned by our ſucceſs; the reiterated adherence of every part of the empire, hath given them the ſtamp of law, hath ſanctified them.

" Let thoſe who have caſt upon us the ſtrange reproach, of having uſed new words, to expreſs new ſentiments and principles, new ideas and inſtitutions, now ſeek, in the vain vocabulary of vulgar things, the definition of the words, *national con-*

* Ne fût établie et affirmie.

† Que nous avons conjurés.

vention. Called forth by the alarm-bell of neceſſity, the loud and awful peals of which no clamour can overcome *, our national convention is above all imitation, as it is above all authority; it is accountable to itſelf alone, and can be judged but by poſterity (1).

" Gentlemen, you are all acquainted with that ſublime trait in the character of that Roman, who, in order to ſave his country from the effects of a vile conſpiracy, had been obliged to exceed the powers entruſted to him by the laws. A captious tribune required him, to ſwear that he had reſpected the laws; hoping, by this inſidious propoſal, to reduce the conſul to the dilemma, of either in-

* Provoqués par l'invincible tocſin de la néceſſité.

(1) *Bravo!*

curring

curring the guilt of perjury, or of making an embarraſſing declaration: *I ſwear*, ſaid that great man, *I ſwear that I have ſaved the republic.* Gentlemen,—I ſwear that you have been the ſaviours of your country—."

Few ſpeeches have produced more effect, than that which I have juſt reported. The applauſe was loud and reiterated.

The plan of the committee was paſſed into a law.

May 15, 1790.

On the 14th, the preſident received a letter from M. de Montmorin, miniſter for foreign affairs, informing him that, in conſequence of certain warlike preparations then carrying on in England, his majeſty

had thought fit to order an armament of fourteen ſhips of the line, in the ports of the Mediterranean, the Ocean, &c.

The debate upon this letter took place on the following day.

M. *de Biron* ſpoke firſt. It was his opinion, that the king ſhould be thanked, for the meaſures which he had taken for the preſervation of peace, and invited to lay before the aſſembly the wants of the marine department.

M. *Alexandre de Lameth* obſerved, that the queſtion ariſing from the letter of the miniſter, ſuppoſed the deciſion of another, which the aſſembly had, as yet, not thought proper to diſcuſs; namely, whether the right of making war and peace, belonged to the people or to the king.—He thought, that, previous to coming to any reſolution upon the meaſures taken by

by the king, with reſpect to the Engliſh armament, it was neceſſary to pronounce upon the conſtitutional queſtion, which he had intimated to the aſſembly.

The opinion of this laſt ſpeaker was ſupported by Meſſieurs Barnave, Broglie, and Robertſpierre—oppoſed by Meſſieurs Duport and Goupil.

MIRABEAU.

"I mean not to ſpeak yet, with regard to the meſſage in queſtion, although I have made up my mind upon that ſubject. I ſhall examine, whether the conſtitutional queſtion be entitled to a previous diſcuſſion. I requeſt that my opinion be not prejudged. This mode of eluding the queſtion, to which the letter of the miniſter hath given riſe, is unreaſonable, inconcluſive, imprudent,

and without object. I ſay that it is unreaſonable and inconcluſive, becauſe the meſſage of the king might exiſt, even though we ſhould have determined, that to the nation belongs the right of making war or peace. The right of arming, of ſuddenly putting himſelf in a poſture of defence, will ever be the right of the ſupreme executor of the nation. Allow me to make uſe of an ordinary expreſſion: the *maréchauſſée* external and internal, by ſea and by land, ought always, conſidering the emergency of a caſe of ſudden danger, to be placed in the hands of the king. I ſay, again, that this mode of eluding the deciſion is inconcluſive, becauſe it were going on the ſuppoſition, that the order iſſued by the king for the armament, is illegal.

" Certain it is, that in every ſociety, the

the proviſional is in force until the definitive be determined: now, the king hath the proviſional; therefore, he might legally give orders for an armament. I ſay, in the next place, that this mode of eluding the queſtion, is not prudent. Suppoſing, that, in fact, the previous diſcuſſion of the queſtion of right were neceſſary, our debate would occaſion delays, which would furniſh a pretext for ſaying, that we had obſtructed the meaſures taken to inſure public tranquillity, and the ſafety of our commerce. I admit, that the right of making peace or war ſhould be diſcuſſed incontinently, and I move for an adjournment, the ſhorteſt that can well be. But, undoubtedly, this great queſtion ought neceſſarily to be prepared beforehand, by the committee of conſtitution; it involves many other queſtions.—Is it poſſible that

you wiſh to ſuſpend the debate upon the king's meſſage? Are you not well aware, that the ſupplies are unprovided for? Are you not well aware, that twenty-four ſhips, armed merely becauſe England was arming, can be to you no object of apprehenſion?

"The extraordinary aid demanded from you, is, gentlemen, but too neceſſary; it is not dangerous. Would not a refuſal expoſe you to the murmurs and reſentment of the merchants? But too many means are employed already to excite ſuch diſcontent. To thank the king for the meaſures which he hath taken for the preſervation of peace, is exhibiting to the nation the armament in the light of a grand precaution; it is the way to beget confidence in every heart. But, if you go to tell the people, that you muſt ſuſpend

pend all your labours, in order to learn to whom belongs the right of making war or peace, the people will ſay in return: Precautions are not the only point in queſtion, the war is ready to burſt upon our heads.

" Thus it is that public affairs are injured and undone, by diſſeminating idle apprehenſions. Were miniſterial manœuvres fraught with *nation-ſlaying* projects*, it were, at moſt, a conſpiracy of pigmies; no perſon can imagine, that fourteen ſhips put into commiſſion, are an object capable of frightening the conſtitution. Though the conſtitutional queſtion were decided, the king might do what he hath done; he might take ſuch meaſures as it became him to take, ſaving

* *Nation-homicides.*—Mirabeau hath coined the word, and his tranſlator muſt counterfeit it.

the

the eternal reſponſibility of miniſters. You cannot, therefore, diſpenſe with attending to the king's meſſage. Accordingly, the queſtion is reduced to this point, not whether the king could arm, for of that there is no doubt, but whether the ſupplies demanded, be neceſſary, a matter as little doubtful. I give it as my opinion, that the meſſage of the king be taken into immediate conſideration."

After long debates, the form of a decree preſented by Mirabeau, was adopted in the following terms:

"The National Aſſembly decrees, that its preſident ſhall, in the courſe of the day, attend the king, for the purpoſe of thanking his majeſty, for the meaſures which he hath taken for the preſervation of peace. The Aſſembly decrees, moreover, that, on to-morrow the 16th of May, the

the order of the day ſhall be the following queſtion relative to the conſtitution: *Ought the nation to entruſt the king with the exerciſe of the right of making war and peace?*"

May 20, 1790.

Firſt Speech on the right of making War and Peace.

From the 16th, the grand queſtion ſtated in the decree of the 15th, was the ſubject of the moſt brilliant debates.

A great number of orators had now been heard. Some were for attributing to the king excluſively, the right of making war and peace. Others claimed likewiſe the excluſive exerciſe of that right, for the legiſlative body.

MIRA-

MIRABEAU.

"In riſing to ſpeak upon a ſubject, which, for theſe five days paſt, hath occaſioned ſuch long debates, my ſole motive is to rectify* the ſtate of the queſtion, which, in my mind, hath not been fixed where it ſhould have been. Urgent peril at the preſent moment, dangers of no common magnitude in future, ought to have rouſed all the attention of patriotiſm: but this important queſtion is likewiſe accompanied, with a danger peculiar to itſelf. Theſe words, war and peace, ſound loftily to the ear, awake and deceive the imagination, inflame the moſt imperious of the paſſions, pride and courage, are connected with the grandeſt objects, victories, conqueſts, the fate of empires, above all, with liberty, with the

* Etablir.

duration

duration of that infant conſtitution, which every Frenchman hath ſworn to maintain: and when a queſtion of public right, preſents itſelf with ſo impoſing an aſpect, what attention ſhould not one pay to oneſelf, in order to reconcile, in ſo ſolemn a diſcuſſion, the cool reaſon, the profound meditation of the ſtateſman, with that emotion, ſo excuſable, which the fears that ſurround us muſt inſpire?

"Are we to delegate to the king, the exerciſe of the right of making war and peace, or ought we to attribute it to the legiſlative body? It is thus, gentlemen, it is with this alternative, that hitherto the queſtion hath been ſtated; and I confeſs that this manner of ſtating it, would render it a queſtion not to be ſolved by me. I do not think that we can, without annihilating the conſtitution, entruſt the king with the exerciſe,

exercise, of the right of making peace or war; as little do I think, that we can exclusively adjudge this right to the legislative body, without preparing for ourselves dangers of another kind, and equally to be dreaded. But are we under an obligation to make an exclusive choice? Can we not, in favour of one of the functions of the government, at once partaking both of action and of will, of execution and of deliberation, make the two powers, which constitute the national strength, and have been sanctioned by our constitution?

"Before we come to any decision upon this new point of view, I must first examine, in concert with you, gentlemen, whether, in the practice of war and peace, the nature of things, their irresistible progress point not out to us the junctures, when each of the two powers may act separately,

ſeparately, the points of contact where their co-operation commences, the functions which are common to them, and thoſe which are peculiar, the moment for deliberation, and the moment which calls for action. Be aſſured, gentlemen, that ſuch an inquiry will conduct us much more readily to the truth, than if we were to confine ourſelves to ſimple theory.

" And firſt, is it for the king or for the legiſlative body, to maintain foreign connections, to watch over the ſafety of the empire, to make, to order the preparations neceſſary for its defence?

" Should you determine this firſt queſtion in favour of the king, and I know not how you can determine it otherwiſe, without creating in the ſame kingdom two executive powers, you are by that alone obliged to acknowledge, that,

frequently, a firſt act of hoſtility ſhall be repulſed, before the legiſlative body hath had time to manifeſt any ſymptoms, either of approbation, or of diſapprobation. Now, what is ſuch act of hoſtility committed and repulſed, but a ſtate of war, if not in will, at leaſt in fact?

"I pauſe at this firſt hypotheſis, in order to make you ſenſible of its truth and of its conſequences. A ſquadron is ſent out for the protection of our colonies; troops are ſtationed upon our frontiers. You admit that theſe preparations, that theſe means of defence, appertain to the royal authority. Now, if that ſquadron be attacked, if thoſe troops be threatened, will they, ere they defend themſelves, wait till the legiſlative body ſhall have approved or diſapproved the war? No, undoubtedly. I conclude, from that ſingle

circumſtance,

circumſtance, that war exiſts, and that the ſignal for it hath been given by neceſſity. Hence it ariſes, that, in almoſt every caſe, there can be no room for deliberation, unleſs in order to determine, whether a firſt act of hoſtility ſhall be followed up with conſequences, that is, whether the ſtate of war ſhould be continued. I ſay, in almoſt every caſe; in fact, gentlemen, it will never become a queſtion with the French, whoſe conſtitution hath ſo lately refined their ideas of juſtice, to make or to concert an offenſive war, that is, to attack the neighbouring ſtates, when thoſe ſtates give us no cauſe to complain of them. Upon this ſuppoſition, undoubtedly, deliberation ſhould take the lead of preparation; but ſuch a war ought to be conſidered as a crime, and I intend to make it a ſubject of an article of decree.

" The point, then, under diſcuſſion, relates only to a defenſive war, where the enemy hath committed hoſtilities; and here we find ourſelves in a paſſive ſtate of war: or where, without hoſtilities having been as yet commenced, the preparations of the enemy give notice of the intention; and in that caſe, the peace being, by that ſingle circumſtance, diſturbed, preparations of defence become, on our part, indiſpenſable.

" There is a third caſe; which is, when it is neceſſary to determine, whether a right conteſted or uſurped ſhall be reſumed, or aſſerted by force of arms; and I ſhall not forget to enlarge upon it; but, until then, I do not ſee that there can be any occaſion for the legiſlative body to deliberate. The time will come, when the preparations for defence, exceeding the ordinary

ordinary eſtimates, the neceſſity for making ſtill greater preparations muſt be notified to the legiſlative body, and it is my purpoſe to ſtate to you what are its rights in that caſe.

" But how! you will ſay, ſhall not the legiſlative body be at all times poſſeſſed, of the power of preventing the commencement of the ſtate of war? No; for that would be like aſking, whether there be any method of preventing a neighbouring nation from attacking us; and what method ſhould you take?

" Would you make no preparations? you will not repel hoſtilities, but endure them. The ſtate of war will remain the ſame.

" Will you charge the legiſlative body with the care of making defenſive preparations? you will not thereby prevent the

attack; and how would you reconcile ſuch action of the legiſlative body, with that of the executive power?

" Will you compel the executive power, to notify to you its moſt inconſiderable preparations, its moſt unimportant meaſures? you will, by ſo doing, violate every rule of prudence; the enemy, acquainted with all your precautions, all your meaſures, will make ſport of them; you will render preparations nugatory: it were better not to order them.

" Will you limit the extent of the preparations? But can you do ſo, with reſpect to all the points of contact, which connect you with Europe, India, America, the whole globe? But muſt not your preparations be proportioned to thoſe made by the neighbouring ſtates? But may not hoſtilities as well commence,

between

between two ſhips as between two ſquadrons? But will you not be obliged to grant, every year, a certain ſum, for unexpected armaments? Muſt not that ſum be according to the extent of your coaſts, to the importance of your commerce, to the diſtance of your tranſmarine poſſeſſions, to the ſtrength exerted by your enemies? Nevertheleſs, gentlemen, I feel as forcibly as any one, how neceſſary it is to take care, that our vigilance be not ſurpriſed by ſuch difficulties: for it is of moment, that there ſhould exiſt ſome check upon the executive power, to prevent it from abuſing even the right of watching over our ſecurity; from waſting immenſe ſums in uſeleſs armaments; from levying forces for itſelf, under pretence of leading them againſt an enemy; from exciting, by too great an apparatus of de-

fence, the jealouſy or the fear of our neighbours. Undoubtedly, we muſt guard againſt theſe evils; but the natural courſe of events ſhews us, how the legiſlative body may repreſs abuſes of this kind; for, on the one hand, ſhould there be a neceſſity for armaments more conſiderable, than the war-extraordinaries are equal to, the executive power may not undertake them, without being duly authorized; and the right will remain with you, of inſiſting upon a negotiation of peace, of refuſing the ſupplies demanded. On the other hand, will not the immediate notification, which the executive power ſhall be obliged to make, reſpecting the ſtate of war, whether impending or commenced, leave you all the means imaginable of watching over public liberty?

" Here, gentlemen, I take in the third

caſe

caſe of which I have ſpoken, that of a war to be undertaken, for the recovery or the conſervation of a poſſeſſion or a right; a caſe which belongs to the deſcription of war definitive. It ſeems at firſt view, that, in ſuch an hypotheſis, the legiſlative body would have to deliberate, even with reſpect to the preparations; but endeavour to apply this caſe, endeavour to realize this hypotheſis. Is any right uſurped or conteſted? The executive power, charged with what relates to foreign connections, attempts, at firſt, to recover the right by negotiation. Should this firſt ſtep prove unſucceſsful, and the right be of importance, ſtill leave to the executive power the right of preparing for defence; oblige it to notify to the repreſentatives of the nation, the uſurpation complained of, the right which is claimed, in the ſame

manner as it ſhall be obliged to notify a war impending or commenced. You will by theſe means eſtabliſh a uniform courſe of procedure, in every caſe; and I am now going to demonſtrate, that it is ſufficient that the co-operation of the legiſlative power commence, at the time of the notification of which I have juſt ſpoken, in order perfectly to reconcile the intereſt of the nation, with the maintenance of the public force.

" Hoſtilities, then, are either commenced or impending. In that caſe, what are the duties of the executive power? What are the rights of the legiſlative?

" I have juſt been declaring them; the executive power is to notify, without delay, the ſtate of the war, either as exiſting, or as approaching, or as neceſſary; to make known its cauſes, to aſk for ſupplies,

plies, to re-aſſemble the legiſlative body, if it be not already aſſembled.

" The legiſlative body, in its turn, hath four ſorts of meaſures to take. The firſt is, to inquire whether, hoſtilities being commenced, our miniſters, or ſome agent of the executive power, have not been the culpable aggreſſors. In ſuch a caſe, the author of the aggreſſion ſhould be impeached as guilty of high treaſon againſt the nation. Make ſuch a law, and you will confine your wars to the ſole exerciſe of the right of juſt defence; and you will have done more for public liberty, than if, in order to attribute the excluſive right of war to the repreſentative body, you ſhould loſe the advantages derivable from royalty.

" The ſecond meaſure is, to approve, to determine upon the war, if it be ne-

ceſſary, to diſapprove it, if it be uſeleſs or unjuſt; to require the king to ſet on foot a negotiation for peace, and to compel him to that meaſure, by refuſing the ſupplies; and in this, gentlemen, conſiſts the true right of the legiſlative body. Here the powers are not confounded; the forms of the different branches of the government are not violated, and the national intereſt is preſerved. But further, gentlemen; when I propoſe the approbation or diſapprobation of the war, by the legiſlative body, while I refuſe it the excluſive right of deliberating on war and peace, do not imagine that, by ſo doing, I am eluding the queſtion, or exhibiting the ſame ſubject of debate in a different form. The exerciſe of the right of making peace and war, is neither ſimply an action, nor yet merely an operation of the will; on

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the contrary, it is connected with both theſe principles: it requires the concurrence of the two powers; and the whole theory of this queſtion conſiſts only in aſſigning, to the legiſlative body and to the executive power reſpectively, the kind of co-operation which, from its nature, is moſt proper for it. To give the legiſlative body the excluſive deliberation upon peace and war, a right which, in ancient times, was enjoyed by the Roman ſenate, a right enjoyed, in modern days, by the ſtates of Sweden, by the diet of Poland, by the confederation of Holland, were transforming the king of France into a ſtadtholder, or a conſul; it were ſelecting from the two delegates of the nation, that delegate which, however unceaſingly purified by the choice of the people, by the continual renovation of the elections,

elections, nevertheleſs cannot ſolely and excluſively deliberate, with any degree of uſefulneſs, upon an occaſion of that nature. On the contrary, to confer upon the legiſlative power the right of deliberating in the ſhape of approbation, diſapprobation, requiſition of peace, proſecution of a guilty miniſter, refuſal of ſupplies, is allowing it to co-operate in the exerciſe of a national right, by the means which are ſuited to the nature of ſuch a body.

" This difference, then, is very remarkable, and leads to the deſired end, by preſerving the two powers in their entire perfection; whereas, otherwiſe, you would lie under the pernicious neceſſity of making an excluſive choice, between two delegates which ought to proceed hand in hand.

" The third meaſure of the legiſlative body,

body, conſiſts in a continuation of the means which I point out, and the right of which means I aſſign to it.

" The firſt of theſe means is, to admit of no receſs, as long as the war continues.

" The ſecond, to prolong the ſeſſion, in the caſe of an impending war.

" The third, to aſſemble the national guard of the kingdom, in ſuch numbers as ſhall be deemed neceſſary, whenever the king ſhall carry on a war in perſon.

" The fourth (even after having approved the war), to require, as often as it ſhall be deemed expedient, the executive power to negotiate a peace.

" I pauſe for a moment upon the two means laſt mentioned, as they diſplay in perfection the ſyſtem which I propoſe.

" On account of the poſſible danger,

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in appropriating the deliberations on war directly and excluſively to the legiſlative body, ſome maintain that the right of war and peace appertains to the monarch alone; they affect even to doubt, that the nation can lawfully diſpoſe of this right, although ſhe hath had the power of delegating the ſovereignty. What? is it, indeed, a matter of no importance in their eyes, to place beſide the conſtitution an unlimited authority, always able to overturn it? Do they wiſh to cheriſh this conſtitution? Would they render it immortal, like juſtice and reaſon?

" On the other hand, becauſe the cooperation of the monarch, in exerciſing the right of making peace and war, may be attended with danger (and, in fact, it is the caſe), others give it as their opinion, that we ought to deprive him of even the right

right of co-operation. Now, are they not, in this, deſiring an impoſſibility, unleſs you take away from the king the preparations for peace and war? Are they not deſiring what is unconſtitutional, ſince your decrees have allowed the king a ſort of co-operation, even in acts which are purely legiſlative? For my part, I am eſtabliſhing the counterpoiſe of the dangers, which may ariſe from the royal power, in the conſtitution itſelf, in the balancing both powers, in the concurrence of the two delegates of the nation, in the internal force which you will derive from that national guard (the only counterpoiſe ſuited to a repreſentative government), againſt an army ſtationed on the frontiers. Congratulate yourſelves, gentlemen, on this diſcovery. If your conſtitution be unſhakeable, it is to ſuch an equilibrium

that

that you will be indebted for its ſtability.

" Again: in conferring upon the legiſlative body, even after it hath approved the war, the right of requiring the executive power to negotiate a peace, take notice, that I do not mean to give excluſively to the legiſlative body, the right of deliberating on peace; for that were to relapſe into all the inconveniences, of which I have already made mention. Who ſhall know the critical moment to think of making peace, if it be not he who holds the thread of all political relations? Will you determine, likewiſe, that the agents employed for that purpoſe ſhall correſpond with none but you? Are you to iſſue inſtructions to them? Are you to anſwer their diſpatches? Are you to diſmiſs them, and appoint others in their room, ſhould they

they fail to fulfil your expectations? Will you diſcloſe, in the courſe of ſolemn debates, demanded by ſome member of the legiſlative body, the ſecret motives by which you are actuated in your endeavours to make peace, which would frequently prove the moſt certain method of not obtaining it? and, even when our enemies ſhall deſire peace as much as we, is your loyalty to impoſe a law on you prohibiting all concealment; and will you likewiſe force the envoys of the powers then at variance with you, to the noiſe and notoriety of a public debate*?

" I diſtinguiſh, then, the right of requiring the executive power to make peace, from an order iſſued for its concluſion, and from the excluſive exerciſe of the right of making peace; for is there any other mode of acting up to the

* A l'éclat d'une diſcuſſion.

national intereſt, than that which I am propoſing? When war is commenced, it is no longer in the power of a nation to make peace; will even the order for withdrawing the troops arreſt the progreſs of the enemy? Should one be diſpoſed to make ſome ſacrifices, can one tell whether the conditions will not prove ſo oppreſſive, that honour muſt forbid their being accepted? Nay, ſuppoſing the negotiations for a peace already opened, will a ceſſation of the war enſue, as the neceſſary and immediate conſequence? It is, then, the province of the executive power, to chooſe the proper juncture for entering upon negotiation, to prepare for it in ſilence, to conduct it with ability: it is the province of the legiſlative power to beſeech the executive, to attend without intermiſſion to that momentous object;

it

it is for the legiſlative power to puniſh the guilty miniſter or agent, who, inveſted with ſuch a function, ſhould neglect to fulfil its duties; it is alſo for the legiſlative to ratify the treaty, as ſoon as the articles are agreed upon. Theſe, gentlemen, are the limits which the intereſt of the public does not ſuffer us to tranſgreſs, and which the very nature of things hath marked out for us.

" In fine, the fourth meaſure of the legiſlative body, is, to redouble its attention, in order to reduce, incontinently, the public force to its permanent footing, as ſoon as the war is at an end. Iſſue orders for diſbanding incontinently the regiments extraordinary, appoint a ſhort day for their ſeparation, limit the continuation of their pay to that term; render the miniſter reſponſible; purſue him as a

criminal, if orders ſo important be left unexecuted: this too is what the intereſt of the public preſcribes to you.

"I have followed, gentlemen, the ſame line of queſtions, in inquiring to whom ought to belong the right of forming treaties of alliance, of commerce, and all thoſe other conventions which may be neceſſary to the well-being of the ſtate. I firſt aſked myſelf, whether we ought to renounce making treaties; and this queſtion is reduced to the inquiry, whether, in the actual ſtate of our commerce and that of Europe, we ſhould leave to chance the influence of the other powers over us, and our re-action upon Europe; whether, becauſe we ſhall on a ſudden change our political ſyſtem (and indeed, how many errors, how many prejudices ſhall we not have to overturn!), we ſhall

oblige

oblige other nations to change theirs; whether, for any long time, our peace and that of the other powers of Europe can be otherwiſe preſerved, than by a balance which forbids the ſudden confederacy, of ſeveral nations againſt one? The time will come, undoubtedly, when we ſhall have friends only, and not allies, when liberty of commerce will be univerſal, when Europe will be only one great family; but hope too hath her enthuſiaſm; ſhall we be ſo fortunate as to find, that the miracle to which we are indebted for our freedom, ſhould, at the ſelf-ſame inſtant, be brilliantly repeated in both hemiſpheres*?

" If, however, treaties we muſt have, he alone may prepare them, conclude them, who ſhall poſſeſs the right of nego-

* Se répète avec éclat dans les deux mondes?

tiation: for I do not ſee how it can be either uſeful, or conformable to the foundations of our government already conſecrated, to enact, that the legiſlative body ſhall communicate with foreign powers, without any intervening agent. Thoſe treaties will be notified to you immediately; thoſe treaties will be in force, only ſo far as the legiſlative body ſhall have approved them. Here again, then, you have before you the juſt limits of that concurrence, between the two powers, the executive and the legiſlative. Nor will it even be ſufficient, to refuſe your approbation to a treaty of a dangerous tendency; the reſponſibility of miniſters preſents you with the means, of likewiſe puniſhing the guilty author of that treaty.

" I am not inquiring, whether it were more advantageous, that a treaty ſhould not

not be concluded, until after it hath been approved of by the legiſlative body: for, is it not evident that the reſult is the ſame, and that it is much more advantageous to ourſelves, that a treaty ſhould become irrevocable, on the ſole account that it ſhall have been ratified by the legiſlative body, than that, even after approbation given, the other powers ſhould ſtill be at liberty to reject it?

"And are there not ſome other precautions to be taken with regard to treaties; and were it not becoming the dignity, the loyalty of a national convention, to determine beforehand, for this and for all other nations, not what treaties may be permitted to compriſe, but what they never ſhall compriſe in any reſpect whatever? My thoughts upon this point coincide with the opinion of ſeveral who

have already ſpoken; I am for having it declared, that the French nation renounces conqueſt of every ſhape and kind, and that it never will employ its force againſt the liberty of any people.

"Such, gentlemen, is the ſyſtem which I have formed in my own mind, reſpecting the exerciſe of the right of war and peace. But I muſt offer ſome additional motives for my opinion; I ought, eſpecially, to make known, why I am ſo forcibly attached, to the idea of giving the legiſlative body, only a co-operation neceſſary to the exerciſe of that right, inſtead of aſſigning it to that body excluſively. The co-operation which I have mentioned, can alone prevent all thoſe dangers.

"And, in the firſt place, to ſhew you that I have not ſhut my eyes againſt any objection,

objection, the following is my creed, as to the theory of the queſtion, conſidered independantly of its political relations. Undoubtedly, peace and war are acts of ſovereignty, belonging to the nation alone. Can this principle be denied, unleſs we take for granted that nations are ſlaves? But the queſtion does not turn upon the right itſelf, the queſtion is concerning the delegation.

" Again: although all the preparations, and the whole direction of war and peace, appertain to the action of the executive power, it cannot be denied that the declaring war and peace, is an act of pure will; that every act of hoſtility, every treaty of peace, may be, in ſome meaſure, thus interpreted: *I, the nation, make war, I, the nation, make peace*; conſequently, how can one man alone, how can a king, a mi-

a miniſter, become the organ of the general will? How can the executor of that general will be at the ſame time its organ?

"Equally am I aware of all the dangers which can ariſe, from entruſting a ſingle perſon with the right, or rather with the means of ruining the ſtate, of diſpoſing of the citizens, of riſking the ſafety of the empire, of bringing down upon our heads, like ſome miſchievous imp of darkneſs, every ſcourge which is the companion of war. And here, like ſo many others, have I ſummoned to my recollection, the names of thoſe wicked miniſters, who kindled accurſed wars, either to render themſelves neceſſary, or to keep a rival at a diſtance. Here have I beheld all Europe in a flame, only becauſe the glove of a ducheſs was not picked up the very moment ſhe dropped it.

it *. I repreſent to my imagination this warrior-king and conqueror, attaching to himſelf the ſoldiery by corruption and ſucceſs, tempted to re-become † a deſpot, on arriving in his own territory, cheriſhing a party within the empire, and overturning the conſtitution with that very hand, which had been armed by the conſtitution, and by the conſtitution only.

" Well, gentlemen, let us conſider of theſe objections, let us enquire, whether the means propoſed for warding off theſe dangers, will not pave the way for other dangers not leſs formidable, not leſs fatal to public liberty.

" I have but one word to ſay, as to the principles. Undoubtedly, the king is not the organ of the public will, but neither

* Pour le gand d'une ducheſſe trop tard ramaſſé.

† Redevenir.

is

is he a ſtranger to the declaration of that will. Accordingly, in confining myſelf to require the co-operation of the two delegates of the nation, I am perfectly acting up to conſtitutional principles.

"Again: I wiſh you to take notice, that, in inquiring whether the right of ſovereignty, ſhould be appropriated to this or that delegate of the nation, in preference to the other, to the delegate called *the king*, or to the delegate gradually purified and renewed, which is named *the legiſlative body*, we muſt baniſh all trite notions of any delegate being ſuperior to controul *; that it is the privilege of the nation to prefer which delegate ſhe pleaſes, for the execution of ſuch individual act of her will; that the ſole queſtion therefore is,

* Incomptabilité.

ſince

ſince we determine the choice, to conſult, not the national pride, but the public intereſt, the only ambition that ſhould inſpire a great people, and the only one that is worthy of it *. All ſubtilty therefore diſappears, in order to make room for this queſtion:

" By whom is it moſt uſeful that the right of making peace or war ſhould be exerciſed?

" Obſerve, moreover, that this point of view is a ſtranger to my ſyſtem; it is for thoſe to anſwer the objection of unaccountability †, who are inclined to attribute

* Seule et digne ambition d'un grand peuple.

† Incomptabilité.

Copious as our language is, we are not ſufficiently furniſhed with thoſe polyſyllables, which expreſs in one word what, otherwiſe, muſt be expreſſed by

tribute excluſively to the king, the exerciſe of the right of making war and peace; but I combat this ſyſtem, in concert with all good citizens. An excluſive right is talked of; and I am talking of only co-operation.

"The danger of each ſyſtem is now diſplayed before our eyes.

"I put the queſtion to yourſelves: ſhall we be better aſſured of having none but juſt and equitable wars, if the exerciſe of the right of making war, be excluſively delegated to an aſſembly of ſeven hundred perſons? Have you foerſeen

by a periphraſe. We want a ſupply of thoſe *alities*, *ilities*, *abilities* and *iſibilities*, with which the French ſeem to have ſtocked themſelves in modern days. For inſtance, we have no ſuch word as *annuality*; its true Engliſh dreſs were *yearlineſs*; but have we any ſuch word as *yearlineſs*? W.

how

how far excited paſſions, to what lengths towering courage and miſtaken dignity, may carry, and even juſtify, imprudence? We have heard one of our orators propoſe to you, ſhould England unjuſtly attack Spain, to croſs the ſeas incontinently, to whelm one nation upon the other, to play out the game to the laſt livre, to the laſt man, with thoſe imperious Engliſh, in the very heart of London,—and we all applauded what he ſaid; I caught myſelf in the fact of applauding him; and a tranſport, the reſult of eloquence *, ſufficed to impoſe, for a moment, upon your wiſdom. Do you imagine that ſuch tranſports, ſhould the legiſlative body ever deliberate directly and excluſively, will not hurry you into wars fraught with infinite diſaſters, and that you will never

* Un mouvement oratoire.

confound the counſels of courage with the counſels of experience? While one of your members is propoſing deliberation, his voice will be drowned in the clamour for a war*; you will ſee yourſelves ſurrounded by battalions of armed citizens. You are not likely to be deceived by miniſters; ſhall you never be deceived by yourſelves?

"There is yet a danger of another kind, which is peculiar to the legiſlative body, when exerciſing excluſively the right of peace and war; and that is, that ſuch a body cannot be ſubjected to any ſort of reſponſibility. I am well aware that a victim, is a feeble ſatisfaction for the crimes of an unjuſt war; but, when talking of reſponſibility, I am not talking of revenge. This miniſter, who you ſup-

* On demandera la guerre à grands cris.

poſe

poſe is to conduct himſelf according to caprice alone, muſt expect to be brought to trial, his head ſhall be the price of his imprudence. You have had more than one Louvois under the foſtering care of deſpotiſm; are you to have a ſecond brood of them, under the auſpices of liberty?

"Some talk of public opinion, as a reſtraint upon the repreſentatives of the nation; but public opinion, frequently led aſtray, even by ſentiments worthy of panegyric, will ſerve only to ſeduce you; but public opinion does not ſeparately influence each member of a great aſſembly.

"That Roman, who, bearing war in the folds of his gown, threatened, while he unrolled them, to ſcatter every ſcourge of war upon the enemy, muſt have felt the full importance of his miſſion. He ſtood alone; a mighty deſtiny was in his hands;

he was the meſſenger of terror; but had the crowded ſenate, which, in the midſt of a ſtormy and impaſſioned debate, diſpatched him on that embaſſy, experienced that fear, which the doubtful, the dreadful iſſue * of the war ſhould have inſpired? You have been already deſired, gentlemen, to caſt your eyes upon free ſtates; it was by wars the moſt ambitious, the moſt barbarous, that they were perpetually diſtinguiſhed.

" Caſt your eyes on political aſſemblies; it hath always been under the magic influence of paſſion, that they have decreed war. You are all acquainted with the anecdote of the ſailor, who, in the year 1740, determined England to reſolve

* Le redoubtable et douteux avenir.—Here a ſlight tranſpoſition improves the ſentence; for, in the original, there is a ſpecies of *bathos*.

upon

upon a war with Spain. *When the Spaniards, after mutilating me, were for putting me to death, I commended my ſoul to God, and my vengeance to my country.* The ſailor was a true orator; but the war which he kindled was neither politic nor juſt; neither the king, nor the miniſtry of England were inclined to it. The emotions of an aſſembly, though leſs numerous, and more liable than ours to the combinations of inſidious policy *, decided in that affair.

" Attend now to ſtill more important conſiderations. Are not you apprehenſive, gentlemen, of the internal diſſenſions, which an unexpected debate on war, war

* Can there be a better argument than this, in favour of the plan, propoſed by one of our own orators lately deceaſed, for increaſing the number of repreſentatives in the Houſe of Commons? W.

undertaken without the king's concurrence, by the legiſlative body, might give birth to, not only within its own walls, but likewiſe throughout the kingdom? Frequently, where two parties ſhall violently embrace oppoſite opinions, the deliberation will be the fruit of an obſtinate ſtruggle, decided merely by a few ſuffrages; and, in ſuch a caſe, ſhould the ſame ſpirit of diviſion take poſſeſſion of the public mind, what ſucceſs are you to hope for, from a war which a great part of the nation diſapproves? Obſerve the diet of Poland: not ſeldom a debate on war only begets a civil war amongſt themſelves. Turn your view to what hath juſt paſſed in Sweden. In vain hath the king contrived to extort the ſuffrages of the ſtates; the diſſidents have nearly gained the guilty ſucceſs of rendering

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the war abortive*. Already had Holland preſented the ſame ſpectacle. War was declared againſt the wiſh of a ſimple ſtadthölder: what fruit have we reaped from an alliance which had coſt us ſo much care, ſo much treaſure? We are going, then, to ſow the ſeeds of civil diſſenſions in our conſtitution, if we confer on the legiſlative body the excluſive exerciſe of the right of war; and, as the *veto* ſuſpenſive, which you have granted to the king, could not in any wiſe be applied to ſuch deliberations, the diſſenſions of which I ſpeak will prove only the more formidable.

" I pauſe, gentlemen, for an inſtant, upon the reflection juſt made, in order to give you to underſtand, that, in the practice of governments, one is often obliged

* De faire échouer la guerre.

to depart, and that too for the public intereſt, from the rigid purity of philoſophical abſtraction. You yourſelves have decreed, that the executor of the national will ſhould, in certain caſes, enjoy the right of ſuſpending, the effect of the firſt manifeſtation of that national will; that he might appeal from the known will of the repreſentatives of the nation, to the preſumed will of the nation itſelf. Now, if we have given ſuch a concurrence to the monarch, even in legiſlative acts, which are ſo foreign to the action of the executive power, how, if we follow the chain of the ſame principles, can we avoid making the king co-operate, I do not ſay merely in the direction of the war, but in the deliberation on the war?

"Let us ward off, if we ought, the danger of civil diſſenſions. Will you as eaſily

eaſily avoid the danger, reſulting from the ſlowneſs of deliberations on ſuch a ſubject, unleſs you confine the object to thoſe caſes only, where the concurrence, or the will of the legiſlative body, is become indiſpenſable? Are you not apprehenſive, that your public force may be palſied, as is actually the caſe in Poland, in Holland, and in every republic? Are you not apprehenſive, that this ſlowneſs may yet increaſe, either becauſe our conſtitution is inſenſibly taking the form of a grand confederation, or becauſe the departments muſt unavoidably acquire, a vaſt influence over the legiſlative body? Are you not apprehenſive, that the people, hearing that its repreſentatives are making a direct declaration of war in its name, may not thereby receive a dangerous impulſe towards democracy, or, what is ſtill worſe,

towards oligarchy; that the inclination for war or peace may originate in the very provinces, be ſoon after diſplayed in petitions, and impart to a mighty maſs of men, that agitation which ſo important an object is capable of exciting? Are you not apprehenſive, that the legiſlative body, notwithſtanding its wiſdom, may be driven to overleap the boundaries of its powers, by the almoſt inevitable conſequences attending the excluſive exerciſe of the right of war and peace? Are you not apprehenſive, that, in order to ſecond the ſucceſsful efforts of a war, which it ſhall have voted without the co-operation of the monarch, it may be deſirous of influencing the direction of that war, the choice of generals, particularly where any ill ſucceſs can be imputed to them; and that this reſtleſs vigilance,

gilance, which, in fact, were a ſecond executive power, may encroach upon the province of the ſupreme head of the nation?

"Again: do you count as nothing, the inconvenience of an aſſembly not permanent, obliged to re-aſſemble at the time which ſhould be employed in deliberation; the uncertainty, the heſitation which will accompany every ſtep taken by the executive power, which will never know how far the proviſional orders may extend; the inconveniences of even a public and unexpected debate, upon the motives for making preparations for war or peace; a debate, of which all the ſecrets of ſtate (and ſuch ſecrets we ſhall have for a long time to come) often form the elementary matter?

"In fine, do you eſteem as nothing, the danger

danger of introducing republican forms, into a government which is at once repreſentative and monarchical? I beſeech you to conſider this danger, with reference to the conſtitution, to ourſelves, and to the king.

"With reſpect to the conſtitution, can we hope to preſerve it, if we compoſe our government of different forms, at variance with one another? I myſelf have maintained, that there exiſts but one ſole principle of government for all nations, I mean their own ſovereignty; but it is not leſs certain, that the different modes of delegating the powers, beſtow on the governments of different nations different forms, the union, the *tout enſemble* of which conſtitute their whole force, and the oppoſition of which, on the other hand, gives birth to an eternal ſpirit of diſcord in a

ſtate,

ſtate, until the form which predominates have overturned all the reſt; and thence ariſe, independently of deſpotiſm, thoſe convulſions which prove the downfal of empires.

" Rome owed her deſtruction to this mixture of royalty, ariſtocracy*, and democracy. The tempeſts which have often agitated ſeveral ſtates of Europe, were de-

* With all due deference to this great ſtateſman, it was to the want of ſuch a mixture, that Rome owed the loſs of her liberty. *Cicero*, and that profound politician *Tacitus*, were decidedly of opinion, that the juſt mixture of the three powers of monarchy, ariſtocracy, and democracy, was the ſublimity of human government, but looked upon it as a delicious picture of the imagination, which they rather wiſhed, than expected to ſee realized. But without reſorting to antiquity, our own admirable and enviable conſtitution is a ſufficient proof of the excellence of the three powers, mixt and balanced. Perhaps the French may yet repent the utter expulſion of ariſtocracy. W.

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rived from no other origin. Men adhere to the diſtribution of the powers; the powers are exerciſed by men; men, abuſing an authority not ſufficiently reſtrained, overleap its boundaries. Thus it is that monarchy exalts itſelf into deſpotiſm: and here you have a reaſon why we ſhould take ſo many precautions. But thus it is, alſo, that repreſentative government degenerates into oligarchy, whenever two powers, intended to counterpoiſe each other, make encroachments, and mutually invade, inſtead of mutually reſtraining.

" Now, gentlemen, excepting the ſingle caſe of a republic properly ſo called, or of a grand confederation unprovided with a ſole chief, or a monarchy where the chief is reduced to a ſplendid cypher*, quote me an inſtance of any nation, which hath aſſigned the exerciſe of the right of war

* A une vaine repréſentation.

and

and peace, excluſively to a ſenate. It may be proved very well, in theory, that the executive power ſhall preſerve its full force, if all the preparations, all the direction, all the action belong to the king, and if the legiſlative body have only the excluſive right of ſaying, *I will have war, or I will have peace.* But ſhew me how the repreſentative body, preſſing ſo cloſely on the executive power, can avoid overſtepping the almoſt imperceptible limits which occaſion their ſeparation. I am ſenſible that the ſeparation ſtill exiſts. Action is not will; but this line of demarkation* is much more eaſily demonſtrated than preſerved; and is it not

* Strange, that we have no ſuch word as this in *Johnſon's* dictionary! Surely it is time to review our language, and, in place of that crowd of obſolete and uſeleſs invalids, introduce ſtout recruits, though enliſted in foreign countries. W.

running the hazard of confounding the two powers, or rather is it not confounding them already, in the real practice of civil polity, to ſuffer them to approach ſo nearly to each other? Beſides, is it not departing from thoſe principles, which already have been ſanctioned by the conſtitution?

" If I examine the inconveniences, reſulting from the excluſive right given to the legiſlative body, as far as it reſpects ourſelves, that is, with reſpect to the obſtacles, which the enemies of the public good have oppoſed unceaſingly to your career, what a multitude of new adverſaries are you not going to ſtir up, amongſt thoſe who have hoped to reconcile all the energy of liberty, with the exerciſe of the royal prerogative? I am ſpeaking of thoſe only, not of the flatterers, not of the courtiers, not of thoſe

degenerate

degenerate beings who prefer deſpotiſm to liberty; not of thoſe who, in this tribune, have had the aſſurance to maintain, that we had no right to alter the conſtitution, or that the exerciſe of the right of peace and war, is inſeparable from royalty, or that the council ſo often corrupted, which, like ſatellites, ſurrounds kings, conveys with more fidelity the public ſenſe of intereſt, than repreſentatives elected by the people. It is not of ſuch blaſphemers, nor of their impious tenets, nor of their impotent attempts, that I am inclined to make mention, but of thoſe men, who, formed for liberty, are in dread, nevertheleſs, of the commotions incident to popular ſtates, of thoſe men, who, after having conſidered the permanence of a national aſſembly, as the ſole barrier againſt deſpotiſm, conſider alſo the

royal power as a uſeful barrier againſt ariſtocracy*.

* After all, this queſtion of *ariſtocracy* is a difficult one for France. I have read no publications upon the late revolution, excepting Mr. *Burke's* invective. But all ſober ſpectators, reflecting on our own government, ſeem to wiſh for a juſt mixture of ariſtocracy in the new French conſtitution. But the nobles of France compoſe a multitude; the nobility of England is but a handful. To admit *all* the nobles of France to an hereditary ſhare in the legiſlature, might, if they threw their weight into the ſcale of royalty, prove of dangerous conſequence to the democratic intereſt. Who can ſay that they would not look for the reſurrection of their deceaſed privileges? Again: admit but *a part* of them; who ſhall be received, who excluded? an inexhauſtible ſource of diſcord. Again: inſtead of granting them hereditary ſeats, decree that the upper houſe ſhall be elective; another ſource of diſcord. What violence, what venality, what crimes of every hue, would not accompany ſuch elections? Perhaps, all that one can well ſay to the French in this knotty buſineſs is, *God guide ye.* W.

" In

" In fine, with reference to the king, with reference to his ſucceſſors, what will be the inevitable effect of a law, which concentred excluſively in the legiſlative body, the right of making peace or war? To weak kings, the privation of authority will prove only a cauſe of diſcouragement and inactivity; but is the royal dignity, then, no longer to make a part of the nation's property? A king encompaſſed with perfidious counſellors, perceiving himſelf to be no longer on an equality with other kings, will imagine himſelf dethroned; he might be inſenſible of his loſs, until perſuaded of it by others; and things owe all their value, and, to a certain degree, their reality, to opinion alone. An upright monarch will believe, that, at leaſt, the throne is environed by quickſands and all the ſprings of the public force will

loſe their elaſticity *. An ambitious prince, diſcontented with the lot which the conſtitution hath aſſigned to him, will become the enemy of that conſtitution, of which he ought to be the guarantee and guardian.

" Muſt we, then, on this account, return to our late ſlavery? muſt we, in order to leſſen the number of the malcontents, ſtain our immortal conſtitution by the adoption of falſe meaſures, by the adoption of falſe principles? This is not what I propoſe, ſince, on the contrary, the queſtion is, whether the double co-operation which I allow to the two powers, the executive and legiſlative, in the exerciſe of the right of peace and war, were not more favourable to national liberty.

* Se relâcheront.

" Imagine

"Imagine not that I have been ſeduced by the example of England, who leaves to her king the entire exerciſe of the right of making war and peace. I myſelf condemn this example.

"In England, the king is not confined to the repulſing hoſtilities; he commences them, he orders them; and I, on the contrary, propoſe to you to proſecute as criminals, the miniſters, or their agents, who ſhall have made offenſive war.

"In England, the monarch declares war by a ſimple proclamation in his own name; and ſuch a proclamation being an undoubted national act, I am very far from thinking, either that it ſhould be made in the king's name, in a free nation, or that there can be a declaration of war, without the concurrence of the legiſlative body.

"In England, the king is not obliged to convoke the parliament, at the commencement of a war; and frequently, during a long interval, the legiſlative body unaſſembled, is deprived of all means of influence; while the monarch, diſplaying all the forces of the empire, embarks the nation in meaſures, which ſhe will be incapable of preventing, when, at length, ſhe is conſulted *. On the contrary, I propoſe

* Here I believe all admirers of our excellent conſtitution will differ from M. *Mirabeau*. As long as parliament holds the ſtrings of the purſe, the king, indeed, may commence a war, but I defy him to carry it on. And even, ſhould a war be entered upon, during the interval between one ſeſſion and another, the right of impeachment at a future day, is an awful check upon adminiſtration. If an Engliſh miniſter hath any regard for his place, or for his head, he will be careful of going to war, without

propoſe to oblige the king to notify, incontinently, the hoſtilities either impending or commenced, and to decree that the legiſlative body ſhall be then inſtantly re-aſſembled.

" In England, the head of the ſtate can make war for his own aggrandizement, for the ſake of conqueſt, that is, in order to exerciſe the trade of tyranny. On the contrary, I propoſe to you to declare to all Europe, that you will never employ

without firſt ſounding the inclination of the public. The ſtern diſapprobation of the people's repreſentatives, either at or after the commencement of a war, is what no wiſe miniſter will riſk incurring, and what, if he were to riſk it, he could not withſtand. Doubtleſs, few of my readers are unacquainted with M. *De Lolme's* ingenious book upon the Engliſh Conſtitution: he hath there treated of the point abovementioned, in a manner that might have ſatisfied even M. de *Mirabeau*. W.

the public force againſt the liberty of any nation.

" In England, the king experiences no other obſtacle, than the refuſal of parliamentary ſupplies; and the enormous debt of the nation is an ample proof, that that barrier is inſufficient, and that the art of impoveriſhing nations is an engine of deſpotiſm, equally formidable with any other. On the contrary, I propoſe to you to appropriate to the legiſlative body, the right of approving or diſapproving the war, of preventing any recourſe being had to force of arms, when there hath not yet been any hoſtility; and the right, even after the war hath met with approbation, of requeſting the monarch to negotiate a peace.

" In fine, the militia of England is not organized in ſuch a manner, as to counterpoiſe

terpoiſe the public force, which is entirely in the hands of the ſovereign. Now, I propoſe, on the contrary, that, in caſe the king makes war in perſon, the legiſlative body ſhall be inveſted with the right, of aſſembling ſuch a portion of the national guard, and in ſuch place, as it ſhall deem expedient. And, undoubtedly, ſhould this precaution appear dangerous or uſeleſs, you will at leaſt organize that internal force in ſuch a manner, as to form an army for the defence of public liberty, as you have already raiſed one for the protection of your frontiers.

"Let us now ſee whether there ſtill remain any objections, which I have not overturned in the ſyſtem which I oppoſe.

"The king, then, it is ſaid, will be able to carry on unjuſt wars, wars which are anti-national! But ſuch an objection, gentlemen, cannot be pointed againſt me, who

am for granting to the king only a ſimple co-operation, in the exerciſe of the right of war; and I would fain know from yourſelves, how anti-national wars could have any place in my ſyſtem. Can you, really and truly, deny the influence of a legiſlative body, continually preſent, continually on the watch; which will have it in its power not only to refuſe ſupplies, but alſo to approve or diſapprove the war, but alſo to requeſt a negotiation of peace? Nay more, do you account as nothing, the influence of a nation organized in every part, and which is perpetually to exerciſe the right of petitioning according to legal forms? A deſpotic monarch might be arreſted in his progreſs; and ſhall not a citizen-king, a king placed in the midſt of an armed people, be ſubject to the like controul?

"It is aſked, who is to watch over the kingdom,

kingdom, when the executive power ſhall put in motion all its force? I anſwer, the law, the conſtitution, the equilibrium ever maintained between the force internal and the force external.

" It is ſaid, that *we are not cut out* for liberty, like the Engliſh*; but we are poſſeſſed of greater means for the preſervation of liberty, and therefore I propoſe greater precautions.

" Our conſtitution is not yet eſtabliſhed; a war may be lighted up, with no other view than to gain a pretext for calling out a mighty force, and for ſoon turning that force againſt us. Well, let us pay a proper attention to ſuch fears; but let us diſtinguiſh the preſent moment from the durable effects of a conſtitution, and let us not conſider as everlaſting, the proviſional

* Encadrés.

diſpoſitions,

diſpoſitions, which the extraordinary circumſtance of a grand national convention may ſuggeſt to us. But, if you carry the diſtruſt of the moment into futurity, have a care that, by dint of exaggerating our fears, we render not the preſervatives worſe than the very malady; and that, inſtead of uniting the citizens by the bond of freedom, we do not ſplit them into two parties, ever ready to conſpire one againſt the other. If, at every ſtep we take, we be threatened with the reſuſcitation of departed deſpotiſm; if the dangers from a very minute part of the public force, be inceſſantly oppoſed as an objection, notwithſtanding the millions of men who are in arms for the conſtitution, what other line of action then remains? Let us periſh this very inſtant. Let us whelm the vaulted roofs of this temple upon

upon our heads, and, to-day, expire freemen, if to-morrow we muſt be ſlaves *.

" We muſt, it is further ſaid, reſtrain the uſe of the public force in the hands of the monarch; I think as you do, and we differ only as to the means. Beware, leſt, in endeavouring to reſtrain his hands, you prevent them from acting altogether.

" But, according to the rigour of principles, can a ſtate of war ever commence, without the nation's having determined upon the propriety of the meaſure ?

" To this I anſwer: the intereſt of the nation is, that all hoſtility be repelled by him who hath the direction of the public force; this is what I underſtand by a ſtate of war. The intereſt of a nation is, that the warlike preparations made by neighbouring powers, be ba-

* *Bravo!*—Might we not think that he here alluded to the death of Sampſon? W.

lanced

lanced by preparations on our ſide ; here again is the ſtate of war, under another point of view. No deliberation can precede ſuch events, ſuch preparations. It is when hoſtility, or the neceſſity of defence by force of arms, which comprehends every caſe, ſhall be notified to the legiſlative body, that it will take the meaſures which I propoſe ; it will approve or diſapprove ; it will requeſt a negotiation of peace ; it will grant or refuſe the neceſſary ſupplies ; it will impeach the miniſters ; it will arrange the internal force ; it will confirm the treaty of peace, or will refuſe to ratify it. I know but of this one mode, of allowing the legiſlative body a uſeful co-operation, in the exerciſe of the right of war and peace, that is, a mixt power, participating at once of action and of will.

" But will not the preparations alſo, which

which are to be left in the king's hands, become a dangerous inſtrument? Undoubtedly they will; but it is a danger unavoidable in every ſyſtem. It is very evident, that, in order to concentrate, uſefully, in the legiſlative body, the excluſive exerciſe of the right of war and peace, we muſt leave it alſo the care of ſuperintending the preparations. But can you do ſo, without altering the form of government? And, if the king is to be charged with the preparations; if he is obliged, by the nature and extent of our poſſeſſions, to diſtribute that warlike apparatus afar off, muſt we not therefore allow him a great latitude in the means? Would not limiting the preparations be the ſame thing as deſtroying them? Now, I aſk you, whether, when the preparations are in being, the commencement of the ſtate of war depend on us, or upon

upon chance, or on the enemy? I aſk you, whether, frequently, ſeveral battles ſhall not have been fought, before the king can know a ſyllable of the matter, before any ſuch hoſtile meaſures can be notified to the nation?

"But, might not the legiſlative body be allowed a concurrence in the preparations for a war, for the purpoſe of diminiſhing the danger of ſuch preparations? Might not a committee of the National Aſſembly be appointed to keep an eye on them? Have a care, gentlemen; we ſhould confound all the powers, by confounding action with will, direction with law; the executive power would ere long become only the agent of a committee; we ſhould thus aſſume the function not only of legiſlating, but likewiſe of governing; for what limits can you aſſign to this concurrence, to this ſuperintend-

ance? In vain would you aſſign any; in ſpite of all your forecaſt, they will every one be violated.

"Have a care too, with regard to another point. Are you not afraid of palſying the executive power, by this cooperation of means? In matters relative to execution, what is to be the work of many, is never well done by any. Beſides, where, in ſuch an order of things, are we to look for that reſponſibility, which ought to be the ægis of our new conſtitution?

"In fine, have we nothing to fear from a king, who, maſking his ſchemes of deſpotiſm under the appearance of a neceſſary war, ſhould re-enter the kingdom at the head of a victorious army, not in order to reſume his poſt of king-citizen, but for the purpoſe of re-poſſeſſing

ing himſelf of the iron throne of tyranny *?

" Well then, what is likely to happen? I ſuppoſe, that a warrior-king and conqueror, uniting with military talents the vices which corrupt men, and the amiable qualities which captivate them, is not at all a prodigy, and that it behoves us, by ſage laws, to provide againſt ſuch prodigies.

" I go upon the ſuppoſition, that ſome corps of a national army, may not poſſeſs ſufficient patriotiſm and virtue to reſiſt a tyrant, and that ſuch a king might find it as eaſy to lead the French againſt the French, as Cæſar did (and Cæſar was not born a king) to prevail upon a few Gauls to paſs the Rubicon †.

* Mais pour reconquérir celui des tyrans.

† Auſſi facilement que Céſar, qui n'étoit pas né ſur le trone, fît paſſer le Rubicon à des Gaulois.

" But

"But let me aſk you, whether this objection be not applicable to all the ſyſtems, and whether we ſhall never have need to arm a numerous public force, becauſe the excluſive exerciſe of the right of war and peace, ſhall be veſted in the legiſlative body?

"Let me aſk you, whether, by ſuch an objection, you are not preciſely introducing into monarchies, the inconveniences peculiar to republics? for, it is chiefly in popular governments that ſuch ſucceſſes are to be dreaded. It was amongſt nations which had no kings, that ſuch ſucceſſes paved the way to royalty. It was to Carthage, it was to Rome, that ſuch citizens as Hannibal and Cæſar, became dangerous. Wither the hopes of ambition, dry up her ſap, blaſt her*; let a monarch

* In two words, "Tariſſez l'ambition."—This is

monarch have nothing to ſigh for, but that in which the law can gratify him; make his magiſtracy what it ought to be, and indulge no further fears, that a royal rebel, abdicating his crown, may run the riſk of hurrying from a victory to the ſcaffold*.

beating a ſmall bit of gold into leaf: it is unfurling a bright conception, and letting its ſtrong colours be ſeen to beſt advantage. Nevertheleſs, the ſublime delights in brevity. W.

* Here, ſome murmurs interrupted the orator. M. *Deſprêmenil* ſtood up and ſaid: "I deſire that M. Mirabeau be called to order; he is forgetting that the king's perſon hath been declared inviolable."

MIRABEAU.

"I ſhall take care how I anſwer the charge of diſloyalty preferred againſt me: you have all heard the caſe that I was ſuppoſing, namely, that of a deſpotic monarch who revolts againſt his people, who comes home with an army of Frenchmen, to re-poſſeſs himſelf of the ſtrong hold of tyranny: now, a king is, in ſuch a caſe, a king no longer."—*The hall reſounded with applauſe, and the orator proceeded*—

"It

" It were difficult, and even uſeleſs, to continue a debate, already but too long, amidſt applauſe and diſapprobation alike extravagant, alike unjuſt. I have ſpoken, becauſe I deemed that it was not for me to diſpenſe with ſpeaking, upon an occaſion of ſuch importance. I have ſpoken according to my conſcience and my opinion; I owe to this aſſembly only what I conſider as truth, and I have uttered that truth. I have uttered it perhaps rather boldly, while wreſtling with potent adverſaries. I were unworthy of the office wherewith I am intruſted; I were unworthy of being numbered amongſt the friends of liberty, ſhould I diſſemble my ſentiments, while inclined to a middle party, between the opinion of thoſe whom I love and hold in honour, and the counſels of men who have been moſt at va-

riance with me, ſince the commencement of this aſſembly.

" You have graſped my ſyſtem: it conſiſts in aſſigning a concurrent exerciſe of the right of making war and peace, to the two powers which have been ſanctioned by the conſtitution. I think I have combated, with advantage, the arguments likely to be adduced upon this queſtion, in favour of the excluſive ſyſtems. There is but one unanſwerable objection, which hath place in all their ſyſtems, and equally in mine, and which will ever embarraſs the various queſtions, that ſhall touch upon the confuſion of the powers; and that is, how to determine upon the means of obviating the laſt degree of the abuſe. I know of but one: one, and but one, will be diſcovered, and I ſhall denote it by this trite, and perhaps

inelegant

inelegant alluſion, which I have already allowed myſelf to make uſe of in this place, but which deſcribes my idea exactly. It is *the alarm-bell of neceſſity*, which alone can give the ſignal, when the moment is arrived for fulfilling the impreſcriptible duty of reſiſtance; that duty ever imperious when the conſtitution hath been violated, ever triumphant when the reſiſtance is juſt, and truly national*.

" I am now going to read to you my plan of the decree: it is not good, it is incomplete. A decree upon the right of war and peace, will never truly become the moral code of the law of nations, until you ſhall have conſtitutionally organized the army, the fleet, the finances, your national guards, your colonies. It is my earneſt deſire, then, that gentlemen will

* *Bravo!*

perfect the ſcheme which I have drawn out, it is my deſire that they will propoſe to us a better. I will not attempt to conceal the ſentiments of diffidence, with which I preſent it to you; I will not conceal, too, my profound regret, that the man who hath laid the foundations of the conſtitution, and who hath contributed the moſt to your immortal work, that the man who hath revealed to the world the true principles of repreſentative government, condemns himſelf to a ſilence which I deplore, which I eſteem criminal, however ungratefully his immenſe ſervices may have been repaid, that the Abbé Sieyes—I aſk his pardon for naming him—does not himſelf advance to inſert in the conſtitution, one of the greateſt ſprings which actuate the ſtate of civil polity. I am the more grieved at this dereliction,

liction, ſince, cruſhed under a weight far above my ſtrength of intellect, inceſſantly called away by that recollection and meditation, which are the prime powers of man, I had not directed my attention to this queſtion, accuſtomed as I was to rely upon that illuſtrious thinker*, for putting the laſt hand to his own admirable workmanſhip. I have preſſed him, conjured him, entreated him as a ſuppliant, in the name of that friendſhip with which he honours me, in the name of patriotiſm, that ſentiment otherwiſe ſo ſacred and full of energy, to endow us† with his ideas, not to leave ſuch a vaſt chaſm in the conſtitution. He refuſed me; I tell it openly. I conjure you, however, to call

* Ce grand penſeur.

† De nous doter de ſes idées.

upon him for his opinion, which ought not to be kept ſecret; to tear, at length, from the arms of diſcouragement, a man whoſe ſilence and inaction I conſider as a public calamity*.

" After this declaration, for the candour of which at leaſt you will give me credit, if you will diſpenſe with my reading my plan of the decree, I ſhall be grateful for the indulgence. [*Read, read.*] You are determined, then, that I ſhall read it: bear in mind that I do ſo in obedience to your command, and that I have had the courage to riſk your diſpleaſure, in my zeal to do you ſervice.

" I move you to decree the following, as conſtitutional articles.

* I know of no paſſage in Cicero, of the complimentary kind, ſuperior to this angry eulogium on the Abbé Sieyes. W.

Article I.

" The right of making war and peace belongs to the nation.

" The exercise of this right shall be delegated concurrently to the legislative body and the executive power, in the manner following:

" II. The care of watching over the external security of the empire, of maintaining its rights and its possessions, belongs to the king; accordingly, for him alone shall it be lawful to keep up political connections with foreign powers, conduct negotiations, make choice of the proper agents to be employed in such affairs, make warlike preparations proportioned to those made by the neighbouring states, distribute the forces by sea and land, in such manner as he shall deem expedient, and regulate the direction of them in case of war.

III. " In

" III. In the caſe of hoſtilities impending or commenced, of an ally to be ſupported, of a right to be aſſerted by force of arms, it ſhall be incumbent on the king to notify, without delay, ſuch circumſtance to the legiſlative body, to make known the cauſes and the motives, and to aſk for the neceſſary ſupplies; and, ſhould the neceſſity for ſuch notification ariſe during the receſs of the legiſlative body, that body ſhall be immediately re-aſſembled.

" IV. If, upon ſuch notification, the legiſlative body deem, that the hoſtilities commenced are a criminal aggreſſion on the part of miniſtry, or of ſome other agent of the executive power, the author of ſuch aggreſſion ſhall be impeached as guilty of treaſon againſt the nation; the National Aſſembly declaring, to that end, that

that the French nation renounces conqueſt, of what kind ſoever it be, and that it will never employ its force againſt the liberty of any ſtate.

" V. If, in caſe of the ſaid notification, the legiſlative body refuſe the neceſſary ſupplies, and manifeſt its diſapprobation of the war, it ſhall be incumbent on the king to take ſuch meaſures, immediately, as may prevent, or put a ſtop to all hoſtility, the miniſters remaining reſponſible for delays.

" VI. The formulary of the declaration of war, and of the treaties of peace, ſhall be, On the part of the king of the French, and in the name of the nation.

" VII. In the caſe of an impending war, the legiſlative body ſhall extend its ſeſſion into the cuſtomary intervals of receſs,

ceſs, and may continue to ſit, without any receſs, as long as the war ſhall endure.

" VIII. During the whole courſe of the war, it ſhall be lawful for the legiſlative body to requeſt the executive power to negotiate a peace, and, in caſe the king ſhall head the army in perſon, the legiſlative body ſhall have the right of aſſembling ſuch a number of the national guards, and in ſuch place, as it ſhall deem expedient.

" IX. At the moment when the war ſhall ceaſe, the legiſlative body ſhall fix the ſpace of time, within which the troops extraordinary ſhall be diſbanded, and the army reduced to the permanent eſtabliſhment; the pay of the ſaid troops ſhall be continued no longer than to that fixed time, after which, ſhould the troops extraordinary remain ſtill embodied, the

miniſter

miniſter ſhall be reſponſible, and be impeached as guilty of treaſon againſt the nation. To this end, it ſhall be incumbent on the committee of conſtitution, to conſider forthwith of the mode of miniſterial reſponſibility.

„ X. It belongs to the king to conclude and ſign all treaties of peace, of alliance, and of commerce with foreign powers, and ſuch other conventions as he ſhall deem conſiſtent with the welfare of the ſtate; but the ſaid treaties and conventions ſhall become effective, only ſo far as they ſhall have been ratified by the legiſlative body*."

This ſpeech obtained great applauſe. —It merited calumny.

June

* In the courſe of this moſt able oration, the reader hath noticed what opinions were entertained by

JUNE 21, 1790.

M. *Barnave* at length made his appearance in the tribune, and, in a very well-made

by *Mirabeau*, with reſpect to certain parts of our unparalleled conſtitution. Thoſe opinions are, doubtleſs, ſo many errors. It muſt, nevertheleſs, be owned, that *Mirabeau* hath handled in a very maſterly manner, the grand queſtion concerning the co-operation of the executive and legiſlative powers, which are the two main pillars of every conſtitution.

Let us hazard a conciſe aſſertion, and deliver it with philoſophical ſolemnity. *The conſtitution of England will periſh, when the legiſlative power ſhall have become more factious, than the executive is ambitious.* We know but too well, that it is not at all impoſſible, for a faction to poſſeſs itſelf of the ſeats in a legiſlative aſſembly, and, by ſome artful and audacious meaſure, arrayed in the garb of law, and by rendering the royal magiſtrate "a ſplendid cypher," to impoſe a new and unexpected domination upon the

ſtate.

made ſpeech, appeared leſs to endeavour at offering a new opinion, than at combating

ſtate. In Rome, the Agrarian law of the tribune *Rullus*, for veſting in ten perſons, during the ſpace of five years, an uncontrolled power of forming colonies of the poorer citizens, in ſuch lands as belonged to the commonwealth by right of conqueſt, was one of the moſt inſidious and, at the ſame time, daring *legal* projects, which had ever been attempted in favour of faction and ambition. Fortunately for Rome, it miſcarried, by the eloquence and activity of *Cicero*.

A queſtion might be ſtarted, whether, in the Engliſh Conſtitution, it were not better that there ſhould exiſt an inceſſant oppoſition to miniſtry, even though that oppoſition be compoſed of a mere faction*, than that there ſhould be no oppoſition

* Lord *Bolingbroke* hath well diſtinguiſhed between *faction* and *party*. "Faction," ſays he, "depends upon the hopes of a few, Party upon the fears of the many."

whatever.

bating what had been advanced the day before by M. Mirabeau.—The reply of

whatever. I am inclined to the affirmative; but on this condition, that the people will be as watchful of the oppoſition as of the miniſtry. If it behoves us to be jealous of the executive power, it equally behoves us to be jealous of the legiſlative. Men are naturally induced to ſuſpect the former; but they are alſo as naturally induced to pay a blind reverence to the latter, and to conſider it as a friend incapable of wronging them.

With regard to the French affairs, one might venture to aſſert, that the final iſſue will depend on the reſpectability of the repreſentative aſſembly; that is, upon vigilance co-operating with integrity. It was a fortunate circumſtance for the exiled *Stuart* family, that the death of Charles I. was ſucceeded by an uſurpation. For the people at length ſickened, at the idea of having been betrayed from deſpotiſm to deſpotiſm. Had a regular, and legal republican form of government, taken place in England after the king's execution, it is highly probable that Monarchy would never again have ſhewn her face in this iſland. W.

the latter will ſhew, whether M. Barnave had been as juſt, as he had been ſeducing. He concluded with preſenting the following diſpoſitions:

"To the king, ſupreme depoſitary of the executive power, belongs the right of providing for the ſecurity of the frontiers, of protecting the national property, of making the neceſſary preparations, of directing the forces by ſea and land, of commencing negotiations, of nominating embaſſadors, of ſigning treaties, of making to the legiſlative body, ſuch propoſitions with reſpect to peace and war, as to him ſhall appear expedient; but the legiſlative body ſhall excluſively exerciſe the right of declaring war and peace, and of concluding treaties."

We think it uſeleſs to repeat, that, in

the courſe of giving his opinion, M. Barnave let fall ſeveral expreſſions offenſive to Mirabeau; but what it becomes us to tell, is, that the diſcourſe of M. Barnave produced a very great effect, and that part of the aſſembly called ſuddenly for the queſtion, to be put upon the plan of decree which he had preſented.

M. *Cazalés* deſired that the debate ſhould be adjourned to the morrow; but that, *on the morrow*, the diſcuſſion *ſhould be cloſed.*

MIRABEAU.

"I aſcend the tribune, in order to ſupport the motion of the member who ſpoke laſt; but I call for an explanation of the words: *The diſcuſſion ſhall be cloſed.* The many, the great many members of this aſſembly,

aſſembly, who appear ſeduced, perſuaded, or convinced, by the ſpeech of M. Barnave, either believe that that ſpeech will triumph over all reply, or they do not believe ſo. If they do believe ſo, I ſhould imagine, that one may expect from the generoſity of their admiration, that they will not dread a reply, and that they will leave us the liberty of anſwering objections; if they do not believe ſo, THEIR DUTY IS, TO LISTEN TO INSTRUCTION *.

" At the ſame time that I acknowledge a very conſiderable ſhare of ability in the ſpeech of M. Barnave, my opinion is, that his whole argumentation may be overturned, that he hath not ſtated the true points of difficulty, and that he hath

* Is not this paragraph much in the manner of the late Mr. *Flood?* W.

neglected either ſome of my arguments, or ſome of the points of view under which they were preſented. I claim, at leaſt, the right of replying in my turn.

"I demand, that the queſtion be diſcuſſed again to-morrow, and that it be not determined until after, by a ſentiment of confidence or diſtruſt, the aſſembly ſhall have cloſed the diſcuſſion. [*Here ſome murmurs were heard.*] My principal argument at this moment, is, the very warmth diſplayed in oppoſition to my demand."

JUNE 22, 1790.

Before we come to analyſe ſome opinions which precede the reply of Mirabeau to M. Barnave, it is a duty I owe to my readers, to relate certain facts of conſiderable importance.

The

The enemies of our orator went ſo far, as to miſrepreſent the ſyſtem which he had ſupported in the foregoing debate. And the people, that is, ſome obſcure men, who, according to a cruel cuſtom among us, are called the people, had been wrought upon to ſuch a degree, that even the life of Mirabeau was threatened*.

Already

* Mirabeau, upon this occaſion, became the object of ſo many imputations and calumnies, that he thought it incumbent on him to ſubmit both his SPEECH and his REPLY, to the tribunal of all the departments. He accordingly ordered them to be printed, and the following was his epiſtle dedicatory:

To the Gentlemen Adminiſtrators of the Departments.

" GENTLEMEN,

" As long as they calumniated only my private life, I remained ſilent, either, becauſe a rigid ſilence is a juſt expiation for faults purely perſonal, how-

Already an infamous libel was hawked through the ſtreets of Paris, entitled: THE

ever excuſable they might be, and I wiſhed to be obliged to time alone, and to my ſervices, for the eſteem of thoſe whoſe eſteem is worth having*; or, ſtill more, becauſe I ever conſidered the rod of public cenſure as infinitely reſpectable, even when placed in the hands of my enemies; or, moſt of all, becauſe I have been always of opinion, that it ſavours of narrow egotiſm and ridiculous inconſiſtency, to attempt to take up the time of one's fellow-citizens, with every thing but what concerns them.

"But, now that they attack me in my principles, as a public man, now that they menace the whole community in menacing my opinions, I could not ſtand aloof without deſerting a poſt of honour, without violating, I may ſay, the precious depoſit which hath been entruſted to me; and I think I owe a particular account of my belied opinion, to

* L'eſtime des gens de bien.

that

THE WHOLE DISCOVERY OF THE GRAND TREASON OF THE COUNT DE MIRABEAU. The authors, or the *pay-*

that very nation, whoſe intereſts I am accuſed of having betrayed. It is not enough for me, that the National Aſſembly hath waſhed away this odious imputation, by adopting my ſyſtem almoſt with unanimity; I muſt alſo receive judgment from that tribunal, of which the legiſlator himſelf is only the ſervant and the organ. Such a judgment is the more important, ſince, placed hitherto amongſt the uſeful tribunes of the people, I owe it a more ſtrict account of my opinions. Such a judgment is the more neceſſary, ſince the queſtion is, to pronounce on principles which diſtinguiſh the true theory of liberty from the falſe, her true apoſtles from falſe apoſtles, the friends of the people from its corruptors; for, in a free conſtitution, the people alſo hath its courtiers, its paraſites, its flatterers, its ſlaves.

" During a ſolemn debate upon the exerciſe of the right of peace and war, while one part of the aſ-

pay-maſters of this infernal production, had reſolved to have it written for ſuch as cannot

ſembly was for preſerving that right entire in the royalty, and another was for giving it excluſively to the legiſlative body, without the co-operation of the king; I propoſed conferring that redoubted right, concurrently on the two parts, which compoſe the ſovereign delegation of the nation.

"Examination ſoon re-united the members of the popular party, whoſe diviſion upon that queſtion aroſe merely from a miſtake. But they who, deſiring at any price to become heads of faction, rather than profeſſors of opinion, had founded their hopes of ſucceſs upon calumny and intrigue; they who, before they would even condeſcend to hear me, had rendered the very delivery of my ſpeech a matter of peril; they who turned a principle of conſtitution into a queſtion of ſelf-intereſt, into an affair of party; thoſe very perſons, even after having been evidently vanquiſhed upon the principles, thought proper to refuſe their aſſent to them. They received, however, from the galleries, the applauſe which had been prepared for them; but their ſyſtem, in appearance

cannot read; in fact, it was read by thoſe who *cannot read*, and the danger of Mirabeau

pearance more popular, and more adapted to affect the ignorant and unadviſed multitude, could not obtain them fifty ſuffrages in the aſſembly below, which oppoſed its uſual courage to menaces and ſeduction.

"It is to you, gentlemen, that I now ſubmit my plan of decree and my two ſpeeches; you will, doubtleſs, be afflicted to find, how far the ſpirit of party can alter the moſt important queſtions, and ſow diſſenſion amongſt the moſt neceſſary auxiliaries of liberty. But did it become me, for the miſerable triumph of a momentary ſucceſs, to abandon the principle, which made the king's participation in the amount of the general will, one of the baſes of our conſtitution? Did it become me to erect altars to popularity, as the ancients did to terrour, and, offering up to it my opinions and my duties, appeaſe it by a criminal ſacrifice?

"Thoſe, gentlemen (already every enlightened citizen perceives it), thoſe alone will be the true friends of the people, who will teach it, that the emotions

rabeau augmented. The tree on which they had determined to ſacrifice him was marked out.

The victim, on his arrival in the hall of the Aſſembly, was accoſted by one of his colleagues in theſe words:—*Your opinion is*

emotions which have been neceſſary to upraiſe us from inſignificance, ſhould be ſucceeded by conceptions fit to organize us for the future; that, after having ſufficiently ſacrificed to jealouſy, after having rid ourſelves of the miſerable rubbiſh, a univerſal concurrence of wills becomes requiſite to rebuild; that, at length, it is time to paſs from a ſtate of lawful inſurrection, to the durable tranquillity of true ſocial order, and that the means which acquired liberty, are not thoſe which muſt preſerve it *.

I am with reſpect,
Gentlemen,
Your moſt humble
And moſt obedient Servant,
MIRABEAU the Elder.

Paris, July 1, 1790.

* *Bravo!*

is juſt, it is favourable to the nation, and, nevertheleſs, you are accuſed, you are threatened. Here, read it; ſee what is now circulating about the ſtreets of Paris; there is a conſpiracy againſt your life. Be firm—

Mirabeau read the title of the accuſation, which had been brought before the tribunal of the people. *I know it very well*, was the anſwer he made to his friend; *they ſhall carry me from the Aſſembly, triumphant or piece-meal.*

However, Meſſieurs d'Eſtourmel, Duqueſnoi, Goupil, le Chapellier, and Duport, were heard ſucceſſively. They all (M. Duport excepted) coincided pretty nearly in opinion with Mirabeau.

The man whom every eye was ſeeking, whom ſome hoped to find at fault, becauſe he had had but a ſingle night to prepare

for his reply; but whoſe ſucceſs was wiſhed for by the majority, becauſe they knew his talents, and were ſatisfied of the juſtice of his cauſe; the man, who had come to the knowledge, but a few minutes before, of the plots laid againſt his reputation and his life, at length made his appearance in the tribune *.

* M. *Chapelier* had adopted the plan of decree preſented by Mirabeau, and made thereto the following amendments. He drew up article V. in theſe terms: "*If, after the ſaid notification, the legiſlative body decree that a war ought not to be entered into, it ſhall be incumbent on the executive power to take immediate meaſures for bringing about a ceſſation, or a prevention of hoſtilities; the miniſtry remaining reſponſible for delays.*"—He moved that article VII. ſhould be referred to the Committee of Conſtitution.—He reduced article VIII. to theſe terms: "*During the whole courſe of the war, it ſhall be lawful for the legiſlative body to requeſt the king to negotiate a peace.*" Mirabeau adopted all theſe amendments.

Second

Second Speech of M. de MIRABEAU *on the right of making War and Peace.*

MIRABEAU.

" It is, doubtleſs, a point gained, towards reconciling oppoſite opinions, to make known clearly what it is that produces the coincidence, and what it is that conſtitutes the difference. Amicable diſcuſſions are more favourable to a right underſtanding of our reſpective ſentiments, than defamatory inſinuation, outrageous accuſations, the animoſities of rivalſhip, the machinations of cabal and malevolence. A report hath been ſpread abroad, for this week paſt, that that part of the National Aſſembly, which approves the concurrence of the royal will, in the exerciſe of the right of peace and war, hath incurred the guilt of parricide

parricide againſt public liberty. Rumours of perfidy, of corruption, are diſſeminated; popular vengeance is invoked to aid the tyranny of opinion. One might aſſert, that there cannot, without a crime, exiſt two opinions, upon one of the moſt delicate and moſt difficult queſtions of civil organization. What a ſtrange madneſs this, what a deplorable blindneſs, which thus inflames us one againſt the other, men whom one and the ſame object, the ſame indeſtructible* ſentiment, ſhould, amidſt the moſt fell debates, ſtill reconcile, ſtill re-unite; men, who ſubſtitute the iraſcibility of ſelf-intereſt in place of patriotiſm, and deliver up one another to the rage of popular prejudice!

"As for me; but a few days paſt, it

* By good luck, and to my great aſtoniſhment, I found this word in Johnſon's dictionary. W.

was

was propoſed to carry me in triumph, and now, the cry is, through every ſtreet of Paris: The Grand Treason of the Count De Mirabeau.—I did not want ſuch a leſſon, to inform me, that there is but a ſhort diſtance from the Capitol to the Tarpeian rock. However, a man combating for reaſon, for his country, will not ſo readily acknowledge himſelf vanquiſhed. He who feels within himſelf the conſciouſneſs of having deſerved well of his country, and, eſpecially, of being ſtill of uſe to it; he who does not feed upon a vain celebrity, and who contemns the ſucceſs of a day, when looking forward to true glory; he who wiſhes to ſpeak the truth, who hath at heart the public welfare, independently of the fickle movements of popular opinion; ſuch a man bears along with him the recompenſe of his

his ſervices, the mitigation of his pains, and the price of all his perils; ſuch a man muſt expect his harveſt, his deſtiny, the only one which intereſts him, the deſtiny of his fame, from time alone, that judge incorruptible, who renders ſtrict juſtice to every one. Let thoſe, who, for this week paſt, have been propheſying my opinion, without knowing what it was, who, at this moment, are calumniating my ſpeech without underſtanding it, let thoſe accuſe me of offering incenſe to idols without power, at the very moment when they lie proſtrate, or of being the vile ſtipendiary, of men againſt whom I have indefatigably waged war; let them arraign as an enemy to the revolution, the man who, perhaps hath not been altogether uſeleſs to it, and who, were that revolution unconnected with his renown, might there alone expect

an

an aſylum; let them deliver up to the fury of an infatuated people, the man who, for theſe twenty years, hath been the adverſary of oppreſſion, who talked to the French of liberty, of conſtitution, of reſiſtance, when his baſe calumniators were at nurſe in the court of deſpotiſm, and ſuckled with the milk of overbearing prejudices *. What is all this to me? This treatment, theſe unworthy practices, ſhall not arreſt me in my career. I will ſay to my antagoniſts, anſwer, if you are able; then calumniate, as much as you pleaſe †.

" I re-

* Suçoient le lait des cours, et vivoient de tous les préjugés dominans.

† Illuſtrious paragraph!---What a torrent of ſublime eloquence, what gallant indignation, what an animated diſplay of glorious ſervices, what a grand and courageous conſcioufneſs of patriotiſm!---Aſſuredly, the noble orator had amply imbibed the ſpirit

"I re-enter the liſts, then, with no armour but my principles, and the fortitude of conſcience. I am going to ſtate, in my turn, the real point of difficulty, with all the accuracy in my power; and I beſeech ſuch of my adverſaries as ſhall not underſtand me, to call on me to ſtop, that I may expreſs myſelf more clearly; for, as to the reiterated reproaches of evaſion, of ſubtilty, of doubling and winding, I have reſolved to ſhake them off, "like dew-drops from the lion's mane*." As

of antiquity, "while his adverſaries were ſucking the milk of deſpotiſm." He who ſeeks for any thing equal to this paragraph, muſt look for it in the famed oration of Demoſthenes *on the crown*, where that ſtateſman defends his whole political life and character. Well may the friend and editor of *Mirabeau* exclaim; that theſe ſpeeches "will inſtruct orators yet unborn." W.

* I aſk pardon for intruding this; there is nothing in the original to warrant it. W.

far

far as on me depends, this day ſhall unveil the ſecret of our reſpective loyalties. M. Barnave hath done me the honour to anſwer me alone; I mean to pay the ſame compliment to his talents; I am going to endeavour, in my turn, to refute him.

"You have ſaid: we have inſtituted two diſtinct powers, the legiſlative and the executive; the one is commiſſioned to expreſs the national will, the other to execute it. Theſe two powers ought never to be confounded.

"You have applied theſe principles to the queſtion of debate, that is, to the exerciſe of the right of war and peace.

"You have ſaid: we muſt diſtinguiſh between action and will; action ſhall be the king's, will the property of the legiſlative body. Therefore, when the queſtion ſhall be to declare war, ſuch declaration being an act of will, it ſhall be the

province of the legiſlative body to make it.

" After having laid down this principle, you applied it to each article of my decree. I ſhall follow the ſame route; I ſhall firſt diſcuſs the general principle: I ſhall then examine the application which you have made of it to the exerciſe of the right of war and peace: laſtly, I mean to follow you ſtep by ſtep, in your criticiſm on my decree.

" You aſſert, that we have two diſtinct delegates, the one for action, the other for will: I deny it.

" The executive power, in whatever relates to action, is certainly very diſtinct from the legiſlative: but it is not true, that the legiſlative body is entirely independant of the executive power, even when it is expreſſing the general will.

" In fact, what is the organ of that general

neral will, according to the conſtitution? It is, at once, the aſſembly of the national repreſentatives, or the legiſlative body, and the repreſentative of the executive power; and it takes place in the manner following: the legiſlative body deliberates, and declares the general will; the repreſentative of the executive power hath the twofold right, either of ſanctioning the reſolution of the legiſlative body, and ſuch ſanction conſummates the law; or of exerciſing the *veto* which is granted to it for a certain time; and the conſtitution hath determined, that, during this period, the reſolution of the legiſlative body ſhould not be law. It is, therefore, inaccurate to ſay, that our conſtitution hath eſtabliſhed two delegates entirely diſtinct, even when the queſtion relates to the expreſſion of the general will. On the contrary, we

have two repreſentatives, who co-operate in the formation of law, one of whom introduces a kind of ſecondary will, exerciſes over the other a ſpecies of controul, and beſtows on the law his ſhare of influence and authority. Therefore, the general will does not reſult, from the uncompounded will * of the legiſlative body.

" Let us now purſue the application of your principle, to the exerciſe of the right of war and peace.

" You have ſaid: whatever, in this, is nothing more than will, as in all the reſt, returns to its natural principle, and can be declared by the legiſlative power alone. Here I ſtop you; and I diſcover your ſophiſm in a ſingle word, which you yourſelf have brought forward: you ſhall not, then, eſcape from me.

* La ſimple volonté.

" In

"In your ſpeech, you confer excluſively the enunciation of the general will—upon whom? *Upon the legiſlative power*; upon whom do you confer it in your decree? *Upon the legiſlative body.* And for this, I call you to order. You have *forfeited* the conſtitution. If you mean, that the legiſlative body is the legiſlative power, you thereby overturn every law that we have made; if, whenever the queſtion turns upon expreſſing the general will, with reſpect to war, the legiſlative body ſuffices—According to that alone, the king having neither participation, nor influence, nor controul, nor any thing of all that we have granted to the executive power, by our ſocial ſyſtem, you would have, in legiſlation, two different principles; the one for ordinary legiſlation, the other for legiſlation with reſpect to war, that is, for the

moſt terrible criſis which can agitate the body politic; one while you would have need, and another while you would have no need, of the aſſiſtance of the monarch, in order to expreſs the general will—and you it is, who talk of homogeneouſneſs, of unity, of compactneſs* in the conſtitution! Attempt not to ſay, that this diſtinction is idle; it is ſo little entitled to that epithet, it is ſo important in my eyes, and in the eyes of every good citizen who countenances my doctrine, that, if you will ſubſtitute, in your decree, in place of the words, *the legiſlative body*, theſe words, *the legiſlative power*, and define that power thus: An act of the National Aſſembly, ſanctioned by the king, we ſhall, by that alone, come to an agreement upon the principles; but you will then return

* D'enſemble.

to

to my decree, becauſe it grants leſs to the king—You make no anſwer—I proceed.

" This contradiction becomes ſtill more ſtriking, in the application which you yourſelf have made of your principle, to the caſe of a declaration of war.

" You have ſaid: a declaration of war is no more than an act of will; therefore, it is the province of the legiſlative body to expreſs it.

" I have here two queſtions to put to you, each of which involves two different caſes.

" The firſt queſtion is; do you mean that the declaration of war is ſo far the property of the legiſlative body, that the king hath not the initiative, or do you mean that he hath the initiative?

" In the former caſe, if he hath not the initiative, do you mean likewiſe that he

he hath not the *veto?* From that moment the king is without co-operation, in the moſt important act of the national will. How do you reconcile this with the rights which the conſtitution hath conferred upon the monarch? How do you reconcile it with the public intereſt? You will have as many encouragers of war, as there ſhall be men of fiery temper.

" Are there, or not, great inconveniencies in ſuch an order of things? You do not deny that there are.

" Are there any, on the contrary, in allowing the king the initiative? By the initiative, I mean a notification, any meſſage whatſoever? You cannot diſcover any inconvenience there.

" Obſerve, moreover, the natural courſe of things. In order to deliberate, it is neceſſary to be informed; by whom are you to be informed, if not by him who

who hath the ſuperintendance of your foreign connections?

" That were, indeed, a ſtrange conſtitution, which, having conferred upon the king the ſupreme executive power, ſhould provide a mean of declaring war, without the king's having originated the debate upon that ſubject, in conſequence of thoſe connections which it is his duty to maintain; your aſſembly were no longer a deliberating, but an acting body; it were, in fact, the governing power.

" You will, therefore, allow the initiative to the king.

" Let us now proceed to the ſecond caſe.

" If you allow the king the initiative, either, you ſuppoſe that it is to conſiſt in a mere notification, or you ſuppoſe, that the king will declare which ſide it is his inclination to take.

" If

" If the king's initiative muſt be confined to a ſimple notification, the king, in fact, will have no concurrence in the declaration of war.

" If, on the contrary, the king's initiative conſiſt, in a declaration of the courſe which he thinks ought to be taken, you have here a double hypotheſis, upon which I requeſt that we may argue.

" Do you mean that, when the king ſhall have given his vote for war, the legiſlative body may deliberate upon peace? I find no inconvenience here. Do you mean, on the contrary, that, when the king is inclined to peace, it ſhall be lawful for the legiſlative body to order war, and to cauſe it to be carried on in ſpite of him? I cannot adopt your ſyſtem, becauſe here ariſe inconveniencies which it is not poſſible to remedy.

" From this war determined on in ſpite

of

of the king, would ere long reſult a war of opinion, againſt the king, againſt all his agents. The moſt turbulent ſuperintendancy would preſide over all the operations; the deſire of ſeconding thoſe operations, diſtruſt of the miniſtry, would betray the legiſlative body to tranſgreſs its proper limits. Committees of military execution would be propoſed, as ſome have lately propoſed committees of political execution; the king would be then no more than the agent of theſe committees; we ſhould have two executive powers, or rather the legiſlative body would exerciſe the royalty.

" Therefore, by this encroachment of one power upon the other, our conſtitution would utterly depart from its own nature; from being monarchical, as it ought to be, it would become a downright ariſtocracy. You have not anſwered

ſwered this objection, and I think that you never can anſwer it. You talk of reſtraining nothing but miniſterial abuſes, and I am talking of the means of reſtraining the abuſes of a repreſentative aſſembly; I am telling you, that it is our duty to controul that bias, which all government takes inſenſibly towards the predominating form, wherewith it is impreſſed.

" If, on the contrary, when the king is inclined to war, you confine the deliberations of the legiſlative body, to a conſent that ſuch war ſhall be undertaken, or to a reſolution that it ought not to be undertaken, and to compelling the executive power to negotiate a peace, you avoid all thoſe inconveniencies: and take eſpecial notice (for here it is that my ſyſtem is ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed), that you are perfectly conſiſtent with the principles of the conſtitution.

" The king's *veto* finds itſelf, from the very nature of things, almoſt entirely blunted in affairs of execution; rarely can it take place in matters relative to war. You parry this inconvenience; you reeſtabliſh the ſuperintendancy, the reciprocal controul, which the conſtitution hath provided, in impoſing upon the two delegates of the nation, her removable repreſentatives, and her unremovable repreſentative, the mutual duty of coinciding, when the queſtion is upon war. You attribute likewiſe to the legiſlative body, the ſole faculty which can enable it to concur, without inconvenience, in the exerciſe of this terrible privilege. You at the ſame time ſecure the national intereſt, as far as in you lies; ſince all that you will have to do, in order to arreſt the progreſs of the executive power, will be, to require it to

place

place continually within the reach of the legiſlative body, the means of deliberating on every caſe which can preſent itſelf.

" It appears to me, gentlemen, that the point of difficulty is at length completely known; and, for a man for whom ſuch applauſe was prepared within and without doors, M. Barnave hath not at all approached the true ſtate of the queſtion. It were now but too eaſy a triumph, to purſue him through all the particulars, where, if he hath exhibited the talents of a ſpeaker, he hath not betrayed the ſlighteſt ſymptoms of a ſtateſman, nor any knowledge of human affairs*. He hath declaimed againſt the miſchiefs

* Wonderful man yourſelf!—after having ſeen you diſplay ſuch high powers of declamation, we now find you reaſoning with the cloſeneſs of an *Ariſtotle*,

miſchiefs which kings can do, and which they have done; and he hath taken ſpecial care not to remark, that, in our conſtitution, the monarch can never hereafter aſſume the character of a deſpot, nor do any thing that can be interpreted as arbitrary. And above all, he hath taken good care not to ſpeak of popular emotions, although he himſelf could have given an example, of the facility with which the friends of a foreign power, can influence the opinion of a national aſſembly, by collecting the people around it, and by procuring for their agents, in the public walks, a clapping of hands, as a teſtimony of general favour. He hath quoted

Ariſtotle, with the candour of a *Fenelon*. Yet (and here you riſe above the generality of men of argument), the dignity of the orator purſues you even in your logic; you ſyllogize with an air of majeſty. W.

Pericles involving his country in a war, in order to avoid paſſing his accounts; ſhould not one be led to imagine, on hearing M. Barnave, that Pericles was a king, or a deſpotic miniſter? Pericles was a man, who, well knowing how to flatter the paſſions of the people, and to procure ſeaſonable applauſe when deſcending from the tribune, by his largeſſes, or by thoſe of his friends, plunged into the Peloponneſian war—whom? The national aſſembly of Athens.

" I come now to the critique upon the plan of my decree, and ſhall take a rapid review of the different objections.

" Article the firſt. '*That the right of making war and peace belongs to the nation.*'

" M. Barnave maintains that this article is uſeleſs; why uſeleſs? We have not delegated

delegated the royalty, we have recognized it, as exiſting anterior to the conſtitution. Now, ſince it hath been maintained in this aſſembly, that the right of making war and peace is inherent in the kingly office, ſince it hath been aſſerted, that we have not even the power of delegating that right, I was therefore warranted, it was my duty to declare in my decree, that the right of war and peace was the property of the nation. Where, then, is the ſnare?

" Article the ſecond. ' *That the exerciſe of the right of war and peace, ought to be delegated concurrently to the legiſlative body, and the executive power, in the manner following.*' According to M. Barnave, this article is contrary to the principles, and diſcovers the fallacy in my decree. Such is, in fact, the queſtion, the true

queſtion which agitates us. Speak accurately; ought the two delegates of the nation co-operate, or not, in expreſſing the general will? If they ought, can we aſſign to one of them an excluſive delegation in the exerciſe of the right of war and peace? Compare my article with yours; you mention neither the initiative properly ſo called, nor propoſition, nor ſanction on the part of the king. If no more do I ſpeak, either of propoſition or of ſanction, I compenſate for this concurrence by another. The line which ſeparates us is, therefore, well known: it is I who am in the conſtitution, it is you who are departing from it. It is very neceſſary that you ſhould return to it. Whereabouts is the ſnare?

"It conſiſts, you ſay, in my not expreſſing in what manner the concurrence

of

of thoſe two delegates ſhould be exerciſed. What? not expreſs it! Then, what do theſe words ſignify: *in the manner following*; and what is the object of the articles which follow? Have I not ſaid preciſely, in ſeveral of the articles, that the notification is in the king, and the reſolution, the approbation, the diſapprobation, in the National Aſſembly? Does it not evidently reſult from each of my articles, that it never ſhall be lawful for the king to commence a war, nor even to continue it, without the determination of the legiſlative body? Where is the ſnare? I know of but one ſnare in this diſcuſſion; that of having affected to give the legiſlative body no more than the deciſion upon war and peace, and of having, nevertheleſs, in fact, by means of a mental reſervation *,

* Une réticence.

a deception of words, entirely excluded the king from all participation, from all influence, in the exercise of the right of peace and war.

" I know of but one snare in this business; but here a little aukwardness hath revealed your secret: it is this; in distinguishing the declaration of war in the exercise of the right, as an act of mere will, you have consequently appropriated it to the legislative body only; as if the legislative body, which is not the legislative power, had, without the king's concurrence, the exclusive property of the will!

" Article the third. Here we perfectly agree.

" Article the fourth. You have asserted, that I had required the notification, only in case of some hostility; that I had taken for granted that every act of hostility

was

was a war; and that, accordingly, I permitted the executive power to make war, without the co-operation of the legiſlative body. How unfair! I have required the notification to be made, in the caſe of *hoſtilities impending or commenced, of an ally to be ſupported, of a right to be preſerved by force of arms:* have I, or not, comprehended all the caſes? Where is the ſnare?

"I have ſaid in my ſpeech, that hoſtilities often preceded deliberation; I have ſaid, that thoſe hoſtilities might be of ſuch a nature, as to amount to a commencement of the ſtate of war. What anſwer have you made me? That war could exiſt no otherwiſe than by a declaration of war. But, are we diſputing about things, or about words? You have ſaid with ſerioufneſs, what M. de Bougainville ſaid at the ſea-fight of the Grenades, in a moment of

heroic gaiety; the bullets were flying about his ſhip; he cried out to his officers: *The pleaſant thing is, gentlemen, that all this while we are not at war*; and, in fact, war had not been declared.

"You have gone largely into the preſent caſe of Spain. An act of hoſtility hath been committed: would the National Aſſembly of Spain have no occaſion for deliberation? Doubtleſs it would, and I have ſaid ſo, and my decree hath formally provided for the caſe; here are hoſtilities commenced, a right to be maintained, a war impending. You have concluded, then, that an act of hoſtility does not conſtitute a ſtate of war. But if, inſtead of two veſſels taken and releaſed in Nootka Sound, there had been an engagement between two ſhips of war; if, in order to ſupport them, two ſquadrons had intermeddled

meddled in the quarrel; if an enterpriſing admiral had purſued the vanquiſhed into port; if an iſland of ſome importance had been taken, would there not then have exiſted a ſtate of war? This will be all that you deſire; but ſince neither your decree, nor mine, preſents means of making the deliberations of the legiſlative body take the lead of ſuch hoſtilities, you will admit that it is not there the queſtion lies. But where is the ſnare?

"Article the fifth. It hath been my wiſh to make mention of a poſſible fact, a fact, of which you, in your decree, do not ſeem to be in the leaſt aware. In the caſe of hoſtilities received and repulſed, there may exiſt a blameable aggreſſion; the nation ought to have the right of impeaching and puniſhing the author of it. It is not ſufficient not to be engaged then

in

in war; we muſt reſtrain the perſon, who, by an imprudent or a perfidious ſtep, would have riſked or attempted engaging us in a war. I point out the means of doing it: do you call that a ſnare? But, according to you, I ſuppoſe that the executive power hath the right of commencing hoſtilities, of becoming an aggreſſor. No, I do not give it ſuch a right, ſince I formally take away the right from it; I am not permitting aggreſſion, for I am propoſing to puniſh it. What, then, am I doing? I am reaſoning upon a poſſible fact, one which neither you nor I can prevent. I cannot hinder the ſupreme depoſitary of the whole national force, from poſſeſſing mighty means and opportunities of abuſing it; but is not this inconvenience to be found in every ſyſtem? It ſhall be, if you like, the royal

diſtemper*: but do you pretend to aſſert, that a mere human inſtitution, a government made by men, made for men, ſhould be exempt from inconveniences? Do you pretend to maintain, that, becauſe royalty hath its dangers, we muſt renounce its advantages? Out with it at once†; for then we ſhall have to determine, whether, becauſe the fire burns, we ſhould deprive ourſelves of the warmth, and of the light which we obtain from it. All can hold good, excepting inconcluſiveneſs; tell us, that we ought not to have any king; do not tell us that we ought to have only a powerleſs, a uſeleſs one.

"The ſixth, ſeventh, and eighth arti-

* Le mal de la royauté.—I might have called it *The King's Evil*, but that would have appeared a pun. W.

† Dites-le nettement.

cles,

cles, I think you have not attacked; we are agreed, therefore, as to them. But allow, that he who impoſes on the executive power, limitations which no other decree hath ſuggeſted, hath not complimented* the royal power with uſurpation, as ſome have not ſcrupled to inſiſt. Admit that he, as well as another, knows how to fortify the people's rights with conſtitutional precautions: admit that, at the very moment when that miſled people is threatening him, he is combating for that people far better even than you†.

"Article the ninth. That in caſe the king ſhall head the army in perſon, the legiſlative body ſhall have the right of aſſembling ſuch a number of the national guards, and in ſuch place, as it ſhall deem

* Doté. † *Bravo!*

expedient.

expedient.—This meaſure hath drawn upon me your bittereſt reproaches. It hath its inconveniences, undoubtedly; is there any inſtitution which hath not? Had you thoroughly comprehended it, you would have perceived, that, had this meaſure been, as you have aſſerted, a needful acceſſory to my ſyſtem, I ſhould not have confined myſelf to applying it to the caſe, doubtleſs a very rare one, where the king headed the army in perſon*, but ſhould have pointed it out as a remedy, for every caſe of war indefinitely. If, in all this, there be any ſnare, the ſnare lies entirely in your own mode of reaſoning, and not in the ſyſtem of one whoſe intention ſurely is, to keep the king aloof† from the command of armies beyond the

* Feroit la guerre en perſonne.

† Ecarter le roi.

frontiers,

frontiers, becauſe he does not think it meet, that the grand overſeer of the community ſhould be made the common centre of ſo many dangerous functions; the ſnare is not to be found in the ſyſtem of one, who provides your civil organization with the only mean of regular inſurrection, which decides the principles of your conſtitution. There is a manifeſt unfairneſs, in ranſacking my ſyſtem for weak points*, or for artful views in providing againſt an inconvenience, ſuggeſted by every member who hath ſpoken before me, and which exiſts alike in all the theories: for it is evident, that a martial monarch may be led aſtray by his paſſions, and ſeconded by legions educated in the ſchool of victory, whether the legiſlative, or the executive power have originated the

* A chercher la foibleſſe de mon ſyſtême.

war.

war. If, in every conſtitutional hypotheſis, this terrible miſchief can be equally foreſeen, there is one remedy, and but one, to oppoſe to it; you and I equally acknowledge the duty of inſurrection, in certain extreme caſes infinitely rare. Is it ſo culpable a proviſion, to render inſurrection more methodical and more formidable? Is it a ſnare, to have aſſigned to the national guards their true deſtination? And what are theſe troops, if they are not the troops of liberty? Wherefore have we inſtituted them, if they be not deſtined to the perpetual conſervation of their conqueſt?—But further; you were the firſt among us who exaggerated this danger; either it exiſts, or it does not exiſt; if it does not exiſt, why have you treated it as a thing of conſequence? if it does exiſt, both my ſyſtem and yours are

equally

equally threatened by it*. The caſe, then, being ſo, either accept the mean I offer, or give me one inſtead of it, or conſent to go without any; it is all equal to me, to me who view this danger in the light only of a prodigy. I give my vote, therefore, for the amendments made by M. Chapelier, who is for leaving out this article.

"It is full time to terminate this long debate. I am in hope that, henceforward, none will think of ſhutting their eyes againſt the true point of difficulty. I am for the co-operation of the executive power, in the expreſſing the general will with reſpect to war and peace, in like manner as the conſtitution hath conferred on it that co-operation, in every part already eſtabliſhed of our new ſocial ſyſ-

* How like *Flood!*

tem.

tem.—My adverſaries are not for it. I am contending, that the ſuperintendance of one of the people's delegates, ſhould never deſert it* in the moſt important political operations; and my antagoniſts contend, that one of the delegates ſhould excluſively poſſeſs the right of making war; as if, even were the executive power a ſtranger to the compoſition of the general will, our deliberations turned only on the declaration of war, and the exerciſe of the right involved not a ſeries of mixt operations, in which action and will juſtle each other, and are confounded.

" Such, then, is the line which ſeparates us. If I am miſtaken, once again, let my adverſary arreſt me in my career, or rather let him ſubſtitute, in his decree, in

* See the grammatical note at the end of this debate. W.

place of theſe words, *the legiſlative body*, the words, *legiſlative power*, that is, an act iſſuing from the repreſentatives of the nation, and ſanctioned by the king, and we are perfectly agreed, if not in practice, at leaſt in theory; and we ſhall then be able to judge, whether this theory be not better realized, in my decree than in any other.

"It hath been propoſed to you, to decide the queſtion, by a parallel between thoſe who ſupport the affirmative and the negative. You have been told, that you would ſee, on the one ſide, men who hope either for advancement in the army, or to be employed in tranſacting foreign affairs; men connected with the miniſters and their agents; on the other, *the peaceful citizen, virtuous, unknown, unambitious, who finds his own happineſs and exiſtence*,

exiſtence, in the happineſs and exiſtence of the community.

"I mean not to follow this example. I think, that it is no more conformable to the expediencies of politics, than it is to the principles of morality, to ſharpen the poniard with which one cannot wound one's rival, without ſoon feeling the weapon returned upon one's own heart. I do not think that men, who ought to ſerve the public cauſe, as true brother ſoldiers, find any pleaſure in fighting one another like vile gladiators; in ſtriving for the maſtery in defamation and intrigue, and not in information and talents; in ſeeking guilty triumphs in mutual ruin and depreſſion, the trophies of a day, injurious to all, and even to the cauſe of glory. But I will tell you: amongſt thoſe who maintain my doctrine, you may reckon

upon all men of moderation, who do not think that wiſdom is to be found in extremes, nor that the ſpirit of pulling down ſhould never make room for that of building up; you may reckon upon the greateſt part of thoſe energetic citizens, who, at the commencement of the States-General (ſuch at that time was the appellation of this national convention, which is yet but in the cradle of liberty), trampled on ſo many prejudices, braved ſo many dangers, beat down ſo many impediments, in order to make their way into the midſt of the Commons, in whom that devotedneſs inſpired the courage and the force, which have really effectuated your glorious revolution; you will there behold thoſe tribunes of the people, whom the nation will long rank amongſt the number of her deliverers, notwithſtanding the inceſſant

inceſſant barking of envious mediocrity; you will there ſee perſons, whoſe very name diſarms calumny, and whoſe reputation, both as public and private men, the moſt headſtrong libellers have never eſſayed to tarniſh; men, in fine, who without blemiſh, without views of intereſt, and without fear, will be honoured even to the grave, both by their friends and by their enemies*.

" I conclude with moving you, that my plan of decree be debated, as amended by M. Chapellier."

Mirabeau is not to depart *piece-meal* from the Aſſembly; he hath juſt now obtained the moſt complete *triumph:* applauſe almoſt unanimous hath informed him, that he had convinced even the greater part of thoſe who decried his ſyſ-

* *Bravo!*

tem.—The cry of *queſtion* is heard from every ſide of the hall.—A decree proclaims that the diſcuſſion is at an end—Nevertheleſs, Mirabeau is for hearing M. Barnave. Leave is obtained for that gentleman to ſpeak—But M. Barnave is far from diſplaying, in his reply, the ſame ability for which his former ſpeech had been diſtinguiſhed—The preference is demanded for the plan of Mirabeau, who is powerfully ſupported by M. de la Fayette.—And the plan of Mirabeau does obtain the preference.

M. *Freteau* deſires the following amendment in the firſt article.—*The right of peace and war belongs to the nation: it ſhall not be lawful to determine upon war, otherwiſe than by a decree of the National Aſſembly, which decree it ſhall not be lawful*

to

to reſolve, unleſs in conſequence of a formal propoſition from the king.

MIRABEAU.

" M. Freteau hath drawn a falſe concluſion from my article, if he hath inferred from it, that it left the miniſters the right of commencing war. That article foreſees the caſe, where a miniſter might order a culpable aggreſſion, or act of hoſtility. It is abſolutely impoſſible to prevent ſuch caſes. It is extremely poſſible, that there ſhould exiſt a miniſter, perverſe enough to commence an underhand war. I aſk, is there any ſyſtem wholly free from this inconvenience? I can take no other precautions, than thoſe which I point out, in enabling you to decide whether the aggreſſion be a guilty one.

Does not the article clearly ſay ſo?—But why is there no anſwer given to the queſtion which I have propounded? Is the legiſlative power the legiſlative body? Is it not, on the contrary, compoſed of the legiſlative body deliberating, and of the king conſenting and ſanctioning? The anſwer ought to be: *that*, *that* is the principle* of the ſyſtem to which you have juſt given the preference."

The previous queſtion is called for, upon the amendment of M. Freteau.

MIRABEAU.

" I declare that I am not one of thoſe who call for the previous queſtion; but I muſt obſerve, that the ſenſe of M. Freteau's amendment is clearly expreſſed in my article."

* C'eſt là le principe, &c.

M. *de*

M. *de Menou.*—" M. Mirabeau ſays, that the amendment propoſed by M. Freteau, is comprehended in his decree. If it be not comprehended in it, as I am tempted to believe, it ſhould be made a ſeparate article. I wiſh to divide the Aſſembly upon this amendment, which ought to have been formed into an article."

MIRABEAU.

" It is neceſſary to examine into the motive of this long-continued obſtinacy, againſt ſeeing in my decree what is in it, and in pretending that I have ſaid what I have not ſaid. If the numerical order of my articles is to be changed, I leave the honour and glory of a diſcovery ſo ſublime, to any who may have a mind to take poſſeſſion of it. As the fifth article contains

contains preciſely the principle; as there is not a ſingle article which does not ſuppoſe the principle; as there is not one of them which does not ſay, that the king is to pay obedience to the legiſlative body; as not one of my arrangements, none of my articles is equivocal, you will allow me to perſiſt in not changing my opinion, in compliment to thoſe worthy perſons, who, for theſe two hours, have been endeavouring to make the public believe, that my opinion is not my opinion." [*Loud applauſe.*]

M. *Freteau* preſents the firſt article, as thus drawn up by himſelf:—" The right of peace and war belongs to the nation: it ſhall not be lawful to determine upon war, otherwiſe than by a decree of the National Aſſembly, which ſhall be reſolved upon, in conſequence of the formal and

neceſſary

neceſſary propoſition of the king, and which ſhall be conſented to by him."

MIRABEAU.

" It will readily be believed, that I aſſent with all my heart to this amendment, for which I have been combating theſe five days. Had I known ſooner, that this was only a conteſt of ſelf-love, the diſcuſſion ſhould have been much ſhorter than it hath been. I move you, that the word *ſanctioned*, a conſtitutional word, be inſerted inſtead of the word *conſented*."

The articles were put ſucceſſively to the vote, and the decree drawn up accordingly *.

* After this, in the original, follows a copy of the decree, containing the amendments agreed to. I omit tranſlating it, as the reader, probably, begins to be weary of this debate. I ſhall therefore conclude with the additional article, propoſed by M. Mirabeau. W.

MAY 24, 1790.

The journal of the proceedings of the 22d was read.

MIRABEAU.

" I propoſe an additional article to the decree which you have paſſed, upon the right of war and peace: it eſtabliſhes a wiſh that hath been ſeveral times declared, by ſuch of my colleagues as are ſincerely attached to the cauſe of the people:—The article is, as follows:

" All treaties and conventions hitherto made with foreign powers or ſtates, in the name of the king, ſhall be examined by a ſpecial committee of perſons choſen by ſcrutiny, in this aſſembly, which committee ſhall, before the end of the preſent ſeſſion, make its report upon each,

to

to the end that the aſſembly may determine upon thoſe, which it ſhall deem worthy of being ratified; and until then, the ſaid treaties, acts, or conventions, are to remain in full force."

M. *Freteau* conſiders this plan of decree as a downright declaration of war; he moves the queſtion of adjournment.

M. *Roberſpierre*, on the contrary, looks upon this new article as a neceſſary conſequence, of the decree reſolved upon two days before; nevertheleſs, he conſents to the adjournment.

MIRABEAU.

"An adjournment is, inconteſtably, at all times, a ſage motion, eſpecially when the queſtion relates to ſome article of importance, and which, for that very reaſon, requires to be drawn up with much accuracy.

curacy. I muſt, however, remark, that the article bears altogether upon this principle, that henceforward it ſhall not be lawful to execute any thing, which hath not been firſt ratified by the legiſlative body. The events which happen every day, preſent us with opportunities of examining the conventions, which occaſion or call forth the diſplay of the national force. For example; although we are perſuaded, that the war between Spain and England is neither menacing nor dangerous; there is no doubt that it behoves us to look behind, and examine whether the conventions be national or not. I have therefore propoſed what I think uſeful to be done, antecedently to the cloſe of the ſeſſion; I agree to the adjournment; but my opinion is, that it ſhould be a ſhort one."

It

It was obſerved by ſome members, that the adjournment, like the decree, would amount to a declaration of war, ſince it would create in foreign powers an apprehenſion of a reviſion, of which it was impoſſible for them not to entertain a jealouſy.

The aſſembly came to the reſolution of paſſing to the order of the day.

It had been, however, the intention of Mirabeau, in ſuggeſting the article already noticed, to introduce the following one:

" The aſſembly excepts from the clauſe above-mentioned, every treaty, act, or convention, by which there may have been ſtipulated, in behalf of any foreign power, a right of interfering in the internal affairs of the French nation, or in behalf of this nation, a like right of interfering in the internal affairs of any

other power or ſtate whatſoever: whichſaid treaties, acts, or conventions, are here declared to be null and incapable of taking effect, as being contrary to the rights of nations, and to the principles of juſtice which ſhould form the baſis of their policy; the aſſembly declaring, that the nation will conſider as inimical, every power which, in contempt of this declaration, ſhall interfere, in any ſhape whatſoever, in any matter appertaining to the legiſlation, or to the conſtitution of the French empire, ſuch as it hath been, or ſhall be eſtabliſhed, by the National Aſſembly, and accepted by the king."

Aſſuredly, this new article, had it been adopted, as it ought to have been, would have ſaved us the ſhame and trouble of making many bravadoes, and throwing out many threats, which, without inti-

intimidating any one, ſerved to caſt a damp upon the activity of our commerce and our induſtry *.

FUNE-

* In one of the foregoing pages, I referred the reader to a note at the end of this debate; the note is relative to a point of Engliſh grammar, the mention of which I deemed it better to defer till now, in order to avoid diſturbing the attention of the reader from the ſubject then before him. The point alluded to is the uſing the word *it*, as a pronoun relative to the ſubſtantive *people*. This ſtartles many; becauſe we have indulged ourſelves in the cuſtom of conſidering the word *people* as of the plural number, and, conſequently, of connecting it with plural verbs and pronouns. I have heard it well obſerved, that nouns of multitude are the reproach of Engliſh grammar. The applying a plural verb to them, is a barbariſm that was unknown to the Greek and Roman languages, and is ſtill baniſhed from thoſe modern tongues, which are evidently a corruption of that of ancient Rome. Still leſs did thoſe elegant and well-organized languages, admit of a plural pronoun be-

FUNERAL EULOGIUM ON FRANKLIN.

JUNE 11, 1790.

For ſeveral days, Mirabeau, tormented by a cruel diſorder in his eyes, had not made his appearance in the aſſembly; and the

ing connected with the term, by which they denominated what we now call *the people*. The rule is uniformly the ſame, not only as to the number, but alſo as to the *gender* of that important appellation, in every one of the languages juſt mentioned. I appeal to the learned reader, with regard to the two firſt, and to the faſhionable reader, with regard to all the reſt. As to the gender, it was univerſally maſculine. The λαος of the Greeks, the *populus* of the Latins, the *le peuple* of the French, the *il popolo* of the Italians, and the *lo peublo* of the Spaniards, form a reſpectable confederacy in behalf of my aſſertion. It is ſtated by thoſe who are learned in our language, that all our words, which are not poſitively diſtinguiſhed

the abſence of Mirabeau was a public misfortune.

The

guiſhed as belonging to ſome ſex, are neceſſarily degraded into the rabble of the neuter gender. Of which ſex is the word *people?* Is it maſculine? *he*, the people. Is it feminine? *ſhe*, the people. Neither. Therefore, according to the rule laid down above, the word *people* muſt be a noun belonging to the neuter gender. Some of our moſt correct writers, aware of the impropriety of conſidering the word people as entitled to a plural verb, have imitated the purity of claſſical antiquity; but, with reſpect to the pronoun relating to the word people, they ſtill adhere to the irregularity obſerved in common ſpeech. For inſtance:—"The people *was* ſatisfied with the conceſſions made in *their* favour, and conſidered *themſelves* ſecured from future encroachment."—The ancients ſpoke of *the people*, as of one great maſs, that is, the nation, or, as one great portion of the general maſs, in contradiſtinction to the ariſtocracy. With reſpect to the pronoun *it*, the univerſal objection is, that the ear is hurt, when that neuter pronoun re-

The father of the American revolution is no more. The Congreſs commiſſions M. de Rochefoucault to acquaint Mirabeau of this event.—Mirabeau is all affliction; his heart mourns, but he reſolves not to be the only mourner; he thinks that all mankind ſhould weep along with him.—He hath appeared in the aſſembly, aſked leave to ſpeak, interrupted the order of the day, and already obtained

preſents the word *people*: very likely; ſo was my ear hurt, at firſt; but I diſdained to compliment my ear by affronting my underſtanding. I recollect a dialogue in *Lucian*, called *the Judgment of the Vowels*. I wiſh ſome able grammarians would go the circuit of our language, and oblige thoſe outlaws, thoſe wandering banditti of pronouns and nouns of multitude, to forſake their irregular courſes, and ſubmit to the ſame government, under which all the other parts of ſpeech are ſo happy. W.

the moſt delightful of all triumphs, A PROFOUND AND PERFECT SILENCE.

MIRABEAU.

" Franklin is dead*.—The genius who freed America, and poured a copious ſtream of knowledge † throughout Europe, is returned into the boſom of the Divinity.

" The ſage to whom two worlds lay claim, the man for whom ſcience and politics are diſputing, indubitably enjoyed an elevated rank in human nature.

" The cabinets of princes have been long in the habit of notifying, the death of thoſe who were great only in their fu-

* An inſtance of the ſublime.—" Portia's dead." —See *Smith*'s notes upon *Longinus*. W.

† Des torrens de lumière.—This is bad.

neral orations. Long hath the etiquette of courts proclaimed the mourning of hypocriſy. Nations ſhould wear mourning for none but their benefactors. The repreſentatives of nations ſhould recommend to public homage, only thoſe who have been the heroes of humanity.

"The Congreſs hath ordered, in the fourteen confederate ſtates, a mourning of two months for the death of Benjamin Franklin; and America is, at this moment, paying that tribute of veneration, to one of the fathers of her conſtitution.

"Were it not worthy of us, gentlemen, to join in this religious act, to pay our ſhare of that homage now rendered in ſight of the univerſe, at once to the rights of man, and to the philoſopher who moſt contributed, to extend the conqueſts of liberty over the face of the whole earth?

Antiquity

Antiquity would have raiſed altars to that vaſt and mighty genius, who, for the advantage of human-kind, embracing earth and heaven in his ideas, could tame the rage of thunder and of deſpotiſm*. France enlightened and free, owes at leaſt ſome teſtimony of remembrance and regret, to one of the greateſt men, who ever ſerved the cauſe of philoſophy and liberty.

"I move you to decree, that the National Aſſembly ſhall wear mourning three days, for the late Benjamin Franklin."

Scarce was this funeral oration finiſhed, when the tears which had interrupted it, were ſucceeded by the applauſe ſo well merited by the orator.

His motion was decreed with acclamations, and Monday 14th was fixed on for the firſt day of the mourning.

* Sut dompter la foudre et les tyrans.

It was then ordered, that the ſpeech of Mirabeau ſhould be printed, and that a letter ſhould be written by the preſident to the congreſs of America, teſtifying the grief of the aſſembly for the death of Benjamin Franklin.

JANUARY 14, 1791.

The eccleſiaſtical committee had been enjoined by the aſſembly, to preſent it with an addreſs upon the civil conſtitution of the clergy. Commiſſioners had been named for this purpoſe, when it was underſtood that Mirabeau had prepared a work on the ſame ſubject. The commiſſioners entreated that he would communicate it to them; and, after various obſervations concerning it, the addreſs of Mirabeau was adopted by the committee.

The

The reading of this addreſs proved an occaſion, or a pretence, for much ſcandal. It is for men whoſe minds are free, exempt from prejudice, exempt from paſſion, to decide with calm reflection on the works of genius.

Plan of an Addreſs to the French, upon the civil Conſtitution of the Clergy, adopted and preſented by the Eccleſiaſtical Committee, to the National Aſſembly, on the 14th of January, 1791, and pronounced by M. de Mirabeau the Elder.

Men of France,

" At the moment when the National Aſſembly, is enjoining your new laws to pay attention to the prieſthood, to the end that, in conſequence of the reciprocal

ſupport

ſupport experienced by all the inſtitutions of the empire, your liberty may become unſhakeable, exertions are made to lead the conſcience of the public into error. The voice of cenſure cries aloud from every quarter *, againſt the civil conſtitution of the clergy, decreed by your repreſentatives, as outraging the nature of the divine organization of the Chriſtian church, and incompatible with the principles, eſtabliſhed and conſecrated by eccleſiaſtical antiquity.

"Might we not have broken the chains of our ſervitude, without ſhaking off the yoke of the faith?—No: liberty is far from preſcribing to us ſo impracticable a ſacrifice. Behold, O fellow-citizens, behold the church of France, whoſe foundations are interjoined and loſt amidſt thoſe

* On denonce de toute part.

of

of the empire itſelf; obſerve how ſhe riſes into regeneration in conjunction with it; and how liberty, which, as well as our faith, deſcends from heaven, ſeems to preſent her as the companion of her eternity and her divinity! Obſerve how theſe two daughters of imperial Reaſon * unite, to develope and accompliſh the perfection of your ſublime nature, and to complete your double neceſſity, of exiſting with glory, and of exiſting everlaſtingly!

" We are reproached with having refuſed to decree explicitly, that the Catholic, Apoſtolic, and Roman religion, is *the religion of the nation.*

" With having altered, without the intervention of eccleſiaſtical authority, the

* I do not ſee how *Faith* can be called the daughter of *Reaſon*; matters of faith, ſays Mr. *Locke*, are above reaſon. W.

ancient

ancient demarkation of dioceſes, and of having, by that meaſure, as well as in ſeveral other points of the civil organization of the clergy, given diſturbance to epiſcopal power.

" Finally, with having aboliſhed the ancient form of nominating the paſtors, and transferred the determination to the ſuffrages of the people.

" Upon theſe three points turn all thoſe accuſations, of irreligion and perſecution, by which attempts are made to diſhonour the integrity, the wiſdom, and the orthodoxy, of thoſe who repreſent you. They are going to anſwer, leſs for their own juſtification, than with a view of prepoſſeſſing the real friends of religion, againſt the clamours of hypocrites who are enemies to the revolution. [*Here Mirabeau was applauded by a great part of the aſſembly.*]

" To

"To declare the Chriſtian religion to be the *national* religion, would have been tantamount to blemiſhing the deareſt and moſt eſſential characteriſtic of Chriſtianity. In general, religion is not, nor can it be, a relation of civil ſociety; it is a relation between man in his private capacity, and the infinite Being who created him. Should you comprehend their meaning, who would talk to you of *a national conſcience?* Aſſuredly, religion is no more *national* than conſcience: for a man is not really religious, merely becauſe he belongs to ſome national religion; and, although there were but one religion known upon earth, and all humankind ſhould agree to profeſs it, ſtill were it true that each would feel a ſincere ſentiment of religion, only ſo far as each adhered firmly to his own; that is, only

ſo

ſo far as he ſtill held to that univerſal religion, although the human race were to abjure it. [*Here the applauſe recommenced.*]

" Therefore, in whatever light we view religion, to call it *national*, is beſtowing on it an inſignificant and ridiculous denomination.

" Were it as judge of its truth, or as judge of its aptitude to form good citizens, that a legiſlator would render a religion *conſtitutional?* But, in the firſt place, are there any *national* truths? In the ſecond place, can it ever become conducive to the public good, that the conſciences of men ſhould be ſhackled by the law of the land? The law unites us to one another, only in thoſe points where we touch. Now, man is tangible in his ſuperficies only; in thought, and in conſcience, he remains apart,

apart, and ſociety leaves to him, in this reſpect, the abſolute exiſtence of nature. [*Freſh applauſe.*]

" Finally, there can be nothing *national* in an empire, but inſtitutions eſtabliſhed for the purpoſe of producing political effects, and religion being no more than the correſpondence of the thought and the ſpiritual part of man, with the divine thought, with the univerſal ſpirit, it follows, that religion cannot, in this point of view, aſſume any civil or legal form. Chriſtianity is principally excluded, by its own eſſence, from every ſyſtem of local legiſlation. God created not that light, in order to lend forms and colours to the ſocial organization of the French ; but he hath placed it in the midſt of the univerſe, to the end that it might ſerve as a point to

rally

rally by, and as the centre of union to the whole human race. Why do they not as well blame us, for not having declared, that the ſun is *the national luminary*, and that no other ſun ſhall be recognized by law, for the regulation of our nights and days? [*Here the hall reſounded with the applauſe of the aſſembly.*]

"Miniſters of the goſpel, you believe that Chriſtianity is the profound and everlaſting ſyſtem of God; that it is the cauſe of the exiſtence of a univerſe, and of a race called humankind; that it embraces all generations, and all times; that it is the bond of a ſociety ſpread out through all the empires on the globe, *and which ſhall be re-aſſembled from the four quarters of the world*, to be exalted into the ſplendours of the unſhakeable empire of eternity.

[*Here*

[*Here the right ſide of the hall laughed* *, *and the left applauded*] and, with theſe ideas thus vaſt, thus univerſal, thus ſuperior to all human localities, you require, that, by a conſtitutional law of our young government, this chriſtianity, ſo ſtrong in majeſty, and in antiquity, be declared the religion of the French? You are they who are outraging the religion of our fathers; you are deſirous, that, like thoſe falſe religions, born of human ignorance, promoted by the tyrants of the earth, and confounded with political inſtitutions, as an engine of oppreſſion, it ſhould be declared the religion of the law, and of the Cæſars!

" Undoubtedly, where an abſurd belief hath given birth to a tyrannical go-

* Obſerve that the clergy fate on the right ſide of the hall. W.

vernment; where a wayward conſtitution is the offſpring of a ſenſeleſs worſhip, religion muſt, indeed, form an eſſential part of the conſtitution.

" But Chriſtianity, weak and tottering at its birth, invoked neither the aid of laws, nor the adoption of governments *. Her miniſters would have rejected the idea of her exiſting *legally*, ſince it was neceſſary that God alone ſhould appear, in what was only his own work; and we ſhould, at this day, feel the want of the moſt ſtriking proof of its verity, had all thoſe, who, before our time, profeſſed

* Good!—On the contrary, it found a perſecutor in every ſovereign; in *primitive* chriſtianity, as delivered by Jeſus and his apoſtles, there was nothing that could flatter pride, or prove auxiliary to deſpotiſm. W.

that

that holy religion, diſcovered it in the legiſlation of empires.

" O ſtrange inconſiſtency! what manner of men are they, who require of us, with a clamour, and a bitterneſs ſo unchriſtianlike, a decree for rendering Chriſtianity *conſtitutional?* Theſe are the very men who condemned the new conſtitution, who repreſented it as the ſubverſion of all the laws of juſtice and of wiſdom, who from every quarter exclaimed againſt it, as the inſtrument of perverſeneſs, violence, and revenge. Theſe are the very men who told us, that this conſtitution would prove the ruin of the ſtate, and the diſgrace of the French nation. O faithleſs men! wherefore would ye introduce a religion, which ye profeſs to cheriſh and adore, into a ſyſtem of legiſlation which ye glory in decrying and

deteſting? Wherefore would ye unite, whatever is moſt auguſt and moſt holy in the univerſe, with what ye conſider as the moſt infamous monument of human malice? *What union*, Saint Paul would ſay to you, *can be eſtabliſhed between juſtice and iniquity? And what can there be in common between Chriſt and Belial?* [Applauſe.]

"No, men of France, it is neither good faith nor ſincere piety, which ſtirs up, amidſt your repreſentatives, theſe conteſts about religion; human paſſions are the cauſe, paſſions, which endeavour to hide themſelves beneath an impoſing maſk, in order to cover with more impunity their dark and vile deſigns.

"Look back, ſurvey religion in her cradle; there it is that you may form an idea of her true nature, and determine the mode

mode of exiſtence, under which her divine founder, meant that ſhe ſhould reign over the univerſe. Chriſt Jeſus is the only one of all thoſe ſages, who have undertaken to inſtruct men, and to render them good and happy, the only one who never beheld them in any political point of view, and who never, in any inſtance, intermingled with his doctrine, principles that were connected with the legiſlation of empires. Whatever be the influence of the Goſpel upon morality, neither Jeſus Chriſt, nor his diſciples, ever gave men to underſtand, that the evangelical diſpenſation, was to form a part of the conſtitutional code of every ſtate. He no where enjoins thoſe, whom he had choſen for the publiſhers of his doctrine, to preſent it to the legiſlators of the world, as containing new ideas

upon the art of governing nations: "Go "forth, and inſtruct men, ſaying to "them: Behold the kingdom of heaven "is at hand; and into whatſoever city "or village ye ſhall enter, inquire who "are they that be willing to give ear "unto ye; and remain there as long as "ſhall be needful, for the teaching them "what ye are to teach them; but if they "refuſe to hear ye, depart, and be in all "things wiſe as ſerpents and harmleſs as "doves *." [*Applauſe.*]

"The goſpel, therefore, is, by the very nature of its inſtitution, an economy wholly ſpiritual, held out to humankind, inaſmuch as we have a deſtination beyond the boundaries of civil ſociety, and conſidered apart from all political re-

* The orator ſeems to have quoted this at random; but his purpoſe was fully anſwered. W.

lations;

lations: it is propoſed to man, as his ſecond reaſon, as a ſupplement to his conſcience *; and not to ſociety, as a new object of legiſlation. The goſpel, on its appearance in the world, required, that men ſhould *receive* it, and that governments ſhould permit it. And that is the exterior characteriſtic which, at its origin, diſtinguiſhed it from every religion, which had tyrannized upon earth; and that likewiſe is what muſt diſtinguiſh it, to the end of time, from every mode of worſhip which depends for its ſupport, on its being incorporated into the conſtitutions of empires.

" It is, therefore, a truth eſtabliſhed upon the very nature of things, upon ſound ſenſe, and even on the eſſence of the goſpel diſpenſation, that your repre-

* What an excellent phraſe!

ſentatives, O men of France, neither ought, nor can decree the title of *national*, to the catholic, apoſtolic, and Roman religion.

" But, ſince Chriſtianity is an economy wholly ſpiritual, above the reach of the power and inſpection of men, wherefore have we taken upon us the right of altering, without ſpiritual intervention, the ancient demarkation of the dioceſes?

" Aſſuredly, we might as well be aſked wherefore we are Chriſtians? wherefore we have aſſigned, upon the national treaſury, the moſt ſolid portion of the revenues of the ſtate, as a maintenance for the miniſters of the goſpel, and to defray the expences of public worſhip? [*Murmurs from the right.*]

" Next after the elements of the Chriſtian conſtitution, its worſhip is the object of

of the free *acceptation* of men, and of the *toleration* of governments. It can be conſidered as no more than *tolerated*, as long as it is received and obſerved, by only a ſmall number of the citizens of the ſtate; but, when it is become the worſhip of the majority, it loſes its appellation of *tolerated worſhip*; it is then *a worſhip received*; it is, in fact, *the religion of the public*, without being, of right, *the religion of the nation.* For a religion is not adopted by a nation, inaſmuch as that nation is a power, but inaſmuch as ſhe is *a collection of men.*

" From this ſtate of worſhip, its exerciſe having no correſpondence with civil order, ſeveral conſequences reſult.

" In the firſt place, eccleſiaſtical authority can diſtribute amongſt the paſtors, the ſpiritual direction of the faithful, according to ſuch diviſions or demarkations,

as

as its wiſdom ſhall preſcribe; and the government, which is not connected by any point of contact with religious polity, hath nothing to overſee, nor to reform, in limitations which are not politically viſible.

"Secondly, in this ſituation of worſhip, which, for ſo long a time, was the only one required by the ancient prieſthood from the powers of the earth, the ſubſiſtence of the miniſters, the conſtruction and reparation of the temples, and every expence attending the ceremonial of religion, are charges foreign to the revenue; for that which does not belong to the inſtitution politic, can have no relation to the juriſdiction of the public expenditure.

"Thirdly, but the moment that a Chriſtian inſtitution, adopted by the majority of the citizens of the empire, hath been

been *allowed* by the national power; the moment that this ſame power, undertaking all the charges of the temporal ſtate of religion, and providing for all the wants of public worſhip and of its miniſters, hath guarantied, upon the faith of the nation, and upon the funds of her revenue, the perpetuity and immutability of her acceptation of Chriſtianity, from that moment, that religion hath received a civil and legal exiſtence in the ſtate, which is the higheſt honour that a nation can render, to the ſanctity and majeſty of the goſpel; and from that moment likewiſe, it is to that national power, which hath beſtowed a civil exiſtence on the religious inſtitution, that the right belongs of determining its civil organization, and of aſſigning to it its external and legal conſtitution. She may, and ſhe ought to aſſume the government

ment of religion, as to the whole of that public character wherewith ſhe hath impreſſed it, and in every point of contact where ſhe hath eſtabliſhed a relation between it and the ſocial inſtitution. She may, and ſhe ought to challenge to herſelf, the regulation of worſhip, in whatever exterior circumſtances ſhe hath cauſed it to acquire, through the whole of that phyſical greatneſs of which ſhe hath cauſed it to partake; throughout every relation, by which ſhe hath connected it with the great machine of ſtate; in fine, in every thing which appertains not to its ſpiritual, internal, and primitive conſtitution. It is, therefore, the right of the government, to regulate the demarkations of the dioceſes, ſince they are the greateſt public characteriſtic of religion, and the manifeſtation of its legal exiſtonce. The ſacerdotal miniſtry is ſubor-

dinate, in the ſubdiviſion of the functions annexed to worſhip, to the ſame authority which preſcribes limits to all the other public functions, and which determines all the bounds and circumſcriptions in the empire.

" Let them tell us what they mean, by the intervention of ſpiritual authority, in a diſtribution wholly political. Does a nation, which, receiving into her boſom, and uniting to her government the Chriſtian diſpenſation, ſo orders the ſyſtem of all her adminiſtrations, that, wherever ſhe finds men to govern, ſhe appoints a prime paſtor for their religious inſtruction, does ſuch a nation arrogate a ſacerdotal power? Does ſhe plan any enterprize againſt the conſciences of her flock, againſt the dogmata of the faith, againſt its

ſacraments,

ſacraments, againſt its hierarchical relations and dependencies?

"But, we are told, the ſpiritual juriſdiction of the biſhops hath changed with the ancient diviſion of the dioceſes; and it is highly neceſſary that the Roman pontiff intervene, for the purpoſe of granting to the biſhops, powers adapted to the new conſtitution.

"Let thoſe amongſt our paſtors, who have upright hearts, and minds capable of obſervation, ſoar above ideas and traditions, of a theology invented for the diſfiguration of religion, and to render her ſubſervient to the ambitious views of certain men, and they will find, that the founder of Chriſtianity ſeems to have conſtituted its prieſthood, with an eye to its future deſtiny; that is, that he framed it

in

in ſuch a manner, as that it might lend itſelf to all the civil forms of thoſe ſtates, in which the Chriſtian diſpenſation ſhould be adopted, and exert itſelf in every direction, and according to every limitation, which the laws of empires ſhould at any time aſſign to it.

" Was it by allotting to each of them a portion of authority, confined by territorial limits, that the author of our religion formed the apoſtolic inſtitution? No: it was by conferring on each of them the plenitude of ſpiritual power, in ſuch wiſe, that one of them, poſſeſſing the juriſdiction of all, was appointed the paſtor of the whole human race. " Go," ſaid our Saviour to them; " diſperſe your-" ſelves over the face of the earth; preach " the goſpel to all mankind——I SEND " YE, AS MY FATHER HATH SENT ME."

". If,

"If, then, at the time of their miſſion, the apoſtles had divided amongſt them, the inſtruction of the whole world, and, afterwards, the powers of earth had altered the limitations which they had voluntarily aſſigned to themſelves, would any of thoſe apoſtles have been diſquieted at finding, that his juriſdiction was no longer the ſame? Can it be ſuppoſed, that they would have reproached the public authority, with aſſuming the right of reſtraining or of extending that of the ſpiritualty? Can it be imagined, eſpecially, that they would have invoked the intervention of Saint Peter, in order to be reinſtated in the functions of the apoſtleſhip, by a new and extraordinary commiſſion?

"And wherefore ſhould they have had recourſe to that ſupreme head of the univerſal church? His primacy conſiſted not

in

in a greater ſhare of ſpiritual power, nor in a more eminent and more extenſive juriſdiction. He had received no particular miſſion; he had not been appointed ſhepherd of the Chriſtian flock, by a ſpecial inauguration, ſeparate from that of the other apoſtles. Saint Peter became paſtor by virtue of the ſame words, which commiſſioned all his colleagues to inſtruct the world at large, and ſanctify all mankind. [*Murmurs from the right.*] We ſee, likewiſe, Saint Paul and the reſt of the apoſtles, eſtabliſhing prieſts and biſhops, in the different countries whither they had carried the light of the goſpel, and appointing them ſhepherds of the flocks, which they had acquired for Chriſtianity: nor do we any where find, that they had called in the authority of

Saint Peter to their aid, nor that the new paſtors had expected from him canonical inſtitution.

" What? do the pontiffs of our religion no longer acknowledge, in their miſſion, the ſame character with which the apoſtles were inveſted? If it be true, that the Chriſtian prieſthood hath been inſtituted but once, for all ages ever afterwards, does not the apoſtolic power ſubſiſt at this day amongſt the biſhops, as ſucceſſors of the apoſtles, in the univerſality of its primitive inſtitution? Does not each of them, at the moment of his conſecration, become what each apoſtle was, at the moment when he received his own, at the feet of the everlaſting paſtor of the church? And is he not SENT, as Jeſus Chriſt was by his father? In fine, hath he not been

inveſted with a character *, ſuited to all places, to all men, and ſubſiſting ever unaltered, amidſt all the changes, all the croſſes, and all the variations, which the demarkations of churches can experience?

"Be watchful of your conduct," ſaith Saint Paul to the biſhops whom he had eſtabliſhed in Aſia; "be watchful of your "conduct, and of that of the flock, for "whoſe ſake the Holy Spirit hath conſe-"crated ye biſhops, in giving to you the "government of the church of God, "which Jeſus Chriſt hath founded by his "blood."——Weigh theſe words, and aſk yourſelves whether Saint Paul believed, in the *locality* of epiſcopal juriſdiction.

"The biſhops, then, are eſſentially charged, with the direction of the univer-

* Une aptitude applicable, &c.—A bad mode of expreſſion, ſurely.

ſal church, as were the apoſtles: their miſſion is actual, immediate, and abſolutely independant of all local limitation. The unction of epiſcopacy is ſufficient for their inſtitution, and they have no more occaſion for the ſanction of the Roman pontiff, than Saint Paul had for that of Saint Peter. [*Redoubled applauſe.*] The Roman pontiff is, as Saint Peter himſelf was, only the paſtor ſingled out, to be the point of re-union to all the other paſtors, to convene the judges of the faith, to be the depoſitary of the belief of all the churches, the conſervator of the univerſal communion, the ſuperintendant of the whole internal and ſpiritual adminiſtration of religion *.

" Now, all theſe relations eſtabliſhed no diſtinction, nor any dependance really

* *Bravo!*

hierarchical,

hierarchical, between him and the biſhops of the other churches; and the latter, when aſcending their thrones, owe him nothing but the atteſtation of their union with the centre of the univerſal faith, and of their willingneſs to become paſtors, in the ſpirit and in the ſenſe of the Catholic belief, and to correſpond with the holy ſee, as with the principal throne of that authority, which Jeſus Chriſt hath beſtowed upon his church *.

" In eccleſiaſtical antiquity, they knew no other form for the inſtallation of their pontiffs. *I profeſs*, ſaid a biſhop once in

* It ſhould ſeem, then, that M. Mirabeau is of opinion, that the pope is only an œcumenical patriarch; and perhaps this is reducing that prelate to his juſt ſtandard. Not but we of the Proteſtant communion, can very well diſpenſe with any ſuch officer. W.

a letter to pope Saint Damaſus, *that I am united in communion to your holineſs, that is to ſay, to the chair of Saint Peter. I know that the church hath been built upon that rock. Whoever eats the paſſover not in that houſe, is one of the profane. He who gathers not with you, is a ſpendthrift.* Here, then, is the preciſe deſcription of that connection, which Jeſus Chriſt eſtabliſhed between Saint Peter and the other apoſtles, and the only rule of the correſpondence, to be maintained between Rome and all the churches of Catholiciſm; and it is likewiſe the only rule which the National Aſſembly hath recommended to the chief paſtors of the church of France.

" It is by recurring to this ancient and incorruptible ſource, of true eccleſiaſtical economy, that good minds will be convinced that the metropolitans receive,

by

by only *occupying* the ſee ſet apart for that high ſtation, all the powers which can be neceſſary to the exerciſe of ſuch a function. Thoſe boundaries purely territorial, which conſiderations of order and police, obliged government to preſcribe to epiſcopal authority, are the only limitations ever acknowledged in the French empire.

" The metropolitan ſees are themſelves only eſtabliſhments of police. The epiſcopate of the metropolitan, differs in nothing from that of his ſuffragans. His ſuperiority over them, is not derived from any particular miſſion; but merely from the ſupremacy of the city, where his ſee hath been eſtabliſhed. This ſort of ſacerdotal hierarchy, was entirely conſtructed upon the civil hierarchy, and the emperors, at their pleaſure, erected the ſeat of thoſe eſtabliſhments.

" Far from having narrowed the epiſcopal authority, and lifted the ſimple prieſthood to the level of epiſcopacy, in the diſpoſitions which we have ordained with reſpect to its adminiſtration, we have rather reſtored to it that immenſity which it enjoyed at its birth; we have deſtroyed all thoſe limits, within which an ancient and thick cloud of prejudices and errors, had confined and concentred its exerciſe: unleſs it be called breaking the hierarchical gradation, which diſtinguiſhes the prime paſtors from the ſubaltern clergy, to aſſign to the biſhop of each church a council, and to enjoin that he ſhall not do any act of authority, *in what concerns the government of the dioceſe*, without having firſt deliberated with the preſbytery of the dioceſe. As if that ſuperiority, which the pontiff, by divine *law*, poſſeſſes over his

clergy,

clergy, diſencumbered * him from the duty impoſed *by the law of nature*, on all men burthened with a vaſt and difficult charge, of invoking the aſſiſtance, and conſulting the knowledge, of experience, of maturity, and of wiſdom! As if, in this reſpect, as well as in ſo many others, the National Aſſembly had not re-eſtabliſhed the uſage of the firſt ages of the church! "Every thing there was done by council," ſays Fleury, "becauſe there the ſole object was, to eſtabliſh the reign of reaſon, the reign of regularity, and of the will of God."—

"In each church, the biſhop did nothing of importance, without conſulting the prieſts, the deacons, and all his principal clergy; nay, he frequently conſulted the whole people, when it was intereſted

* L'affranchiſſoit.

in

in the affair, as, for inſtance, in the caſe of ordination*.

" But could and ought the ſame power, which excluſively poſſeſſes the national legiſlation, cauſe the ancient form of appointing the paſtors to diſappear, and ſubmit it to the election of the people?

" Yes, indubitably, that power poſſeſſed this right, if the diſpoſal of an office belongs eſſentially to thoſe, who are at once the object and the end of ſuch an office; and the prieſthood of France owes alſo, on this conſideration, the example of reſpect and obedience.

" It is for men that a religion and a prieſthood exiſt, and not for the Divinity, who cannot have occaſion for them. " Every biſhop," ſays Saint Paul, " elect-

* What impiety in all this!—Rank atheiſm. W.

" ed

" ed from amongſt men, is appointed for " the ſervice of men; it behoveth him to " underſtand how to compaſſionate igno- " rance, to condeſcend to the feeble, and " to enlighten thoſe that be in error."

" And, not only does the apoſtle here proclaim the right of the people, in eccleſiaſtical elections, as derived from the nature of things, but he likewiſe ſupports it, by particular conſiderations of order and of circumſtances. The ſacerdotal function is a miniſtry of humanity, of condeſcenſion, of charity, and of zeal. It is therefore that Saint Paul recommends, that it ſhould be entruſted to men only, who are indued with a ſpirit truly ſenſible and paternal, to men only, who have been long exerciſed in beneficence, and well known to the public by their pacific inclinations, and by their habits of doing good.

good *. It is therefore, likewiſe, that he points out, as proper judges of their fitneſs for the pontifical functions, and to become paſtors of the people, thoſe who have been witneſſes of their conduct, and the objects of their care †.

" And yet, becauſe the National Aſſembly of France, commiſſioned to proclaim the ſacred rights of the people, hath recalled it to the eccleſiaſtical elections; becauſe the Aſſembly hath re-eſtabliſhed the ancient form of theſe elections, and reſcued from neglect, a mode of proceeding that was a ſource of glory to religion, in her vernal bloom of youth, lo! the miniſters of that religion cry uſurpation,

* More atheiſm.

† Was this better than a royal *congé d'elire* to a dean and chapter? that is, *the king gives his compliments to them, and inſiſts that they ſhall elect for their biſhop, a perſon whom, perhaps, they never before heard of.* W.

ſcandal,

ſcandal, impiety; reproach, as a wicked attempt upon the impreſcriptible authority of the clergy, the reſtoration of the right of election to the people, and dare to claim, as of neceſſity, the pretended concurrence of the pontiff of Rome!

"Formerly, when an immoral pope and an audacious deſpot fabricated, unknown to the church and to the empire, that profane and infamous contract, that *concordat* which was nothing more than the coalition of two uſurpers, for the purpoſe of ſharing between them the rights and the gold of France, the nation was ſeen, with the clergy at her head, oppoſing to this robbery the whole force of an unanimous reſiſtance, demanding the reſtoration of the elections, and, with a perſevering energy, laying claim to *the pragmatic ſanction*, which alone, until then,

then, had conſtituted the common law of the kingdom. [*Applauſe.*]

" And it is this irreligious contract, this ſimoniacal convention, which, at the time when it was hatched, drew upon it all the anathemas of the ſacerdotal order here; it is this criminal ſtipulation between avarice and ambition, this ignominious compact, which, through ſo many ſucceſſive ages, was imprinting on the moſt hallowed functions the vile blemiſh of venality, this it is, which, at the preſent day, our prelates have the aſſurance to claim in the name of religion, in the face of the whole world, beſide the cradle of liberty, in the very ſanctuary of thoſe laws, which are regenerating the altar and the empire * !

* What a paragraph !—I could almoſt ſnatch the crown of eloquence from the head of *Demoſthenes*, and place it upon the brows of *Mirabeau*. W.

" But

" But, it is ſaid, the choice of paſtors, entruſted to the people, will prove nothing but the offspring of cabal.

" Amongſt the moſt implacable detractors of the re-eſtabliſhment of the elections, how many are there to whom we might make this dreadful anſwer? " Is " it for you to borrow the language of " piety, in order to condemn a law, that " aſſigns you ſucceſſors, worthy of the " eſteem and veneration of that people, " which hath unceaſingly beſought Heaven " to grant its children a paſtor, who " might be capable of comforting and edi- " fying them? Is it for you to invoke " religion, againſt the ſtability of the con- " ſtitution, who ought to become its moſt " ſteady ſupporters; you, who could not " ſuſtain, for a ſingle inſtant, the ſight of " what ye are, if, on a ſudden, rigid

" truth

" truth were to manifeſt, in full day, the " dark and deſpicable intrigues which " paved the way to your elevation *; " [*Applauſe*]. you who are the creatures " of the moſt wicked adminiſtration; you " who are the fruit of that formidable " iniquity, which ſummoned to the moſt " exalted ſituations in the prieſthood, thoſe " who grovelled in ſloth and ignorance, " and who unmercifully ſhut the doors of " the ſanctuary, againſt the laborious " and well-informed claſs of eccleſiaſtics?" [*Murmurs and ſymptoms of agitation, from the right.*]

M. *Gerard:* " Theſe are truths." [*A great part of the Aſſembly applauded.*]

Mirabeau in continuation: " How could theſe men, who make ſuch an oſten-

* *Bravo!*—More atheiſm.—I will worry them, as the Baſtard, in *King John*, worries the worthleſs Duke of Auſtria. W.

tatious

tatious ſhow of zeal, to ſecure to the churches, a choice of paſtors worthy of a name ſo ſanctified, how could they ſo long ſit ſilent, when they beheld the fate of religion, and the diſpoſal of the auguſt functions of the apoſtleſhip, abandoned to the nod of a miniſter, the ſlave of thoſe intrigues which continually ſurround the throne? Opportunities of riſing up againſt a ſacrilegious traffic, preſented themſelves to the clergy, at conjunctures regularly returning; but how did the clergy act in thoſe aſſemblies? Inſtead of ſeeking a remedy for this deplorable ſtate of religion, and enlightening the wiſdom of a pious and juſt prince, as to the impiety of leaving the care of providing paſtors for the church of France, to the pitileſs oppreſſors of the people, it frivolouſly lays down at the feet of the royal

patron, a vain and puſillanimous tribute of adulation, and contributions, the burthen of which is impoſed on that poor claſs, the aſſiduous and ever-reſident labourers of the goſpel. [*Freſh applauſe.*] What? is it not evident, that, had our prelates demanded another form of appointment to eccleſiaſtical offices, it would have been condemning too openly their anti-canonical creation, and avowing in the face of the nation, that they themſelves were but intruders, whom it was neceſſary to turn out, and whoſe places ought to be occupied by others?

" But if, not daring to reproach, abſolutely, the re-eſtabliſhment of the elective form, for eccleſiaſtical employments, the prelates ſtill inſiſt, that the mode decreed by the conſtituting body, *is contrary to the ancient forms*, which always allowed

allowed the prieſthood the honours of ſuperior influence, we ſhall aſk them, whether they have diſcovered that that influence was founded, upon any preciſe law of the evangelical conſtitution, and whether it was an effect of thoſe rules by which the Redeemer, firſt organized the government of our religion? We ſhall aſk them, of what kind were the firſt elections, which immediately followed the foundation of Chriſtianity? A number of diſciples was choſen, at the inſtigation of the apoſtles, ſeven men inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, and with wiſdom, for the purpoſe of aſſiſting them in the duties of the apoſtleſhip; theſe men received, from the apoſtles, the impoſition of hands, and in that manner became the firſt deacons.

" And, in our days, when and in what manner did the clergy bear a part, in the taſk of diſtributing the dioceſan and

parochial offices? Epiſcopal ſees were to be filled, and the king gave them away; rich abbeys were to be conferred, and the court conferred them; a great number of beneficed cures were at the diſpoſal of lay patrons, and theſe lay patrons diſpoſed of them *: a non-catholic, a Jew, by the mere acquiſition of certain ſeigneuries, became the arbiter of the deſtiny of religion, and of the moral condition of a multitude of pariſhes; thus the great titles and the great offices of the church were parcelled out, without the participation, and even without the knowledge of the clergy; and what little right remained to it, of nominating to the obſcure and ſubaltern benefices, ſerved only to render its want of weight in the diſpoſal of benefices, the more public and the more perceptible.

* A crying grievance in other kingdoms alſo. W.

" Undoubtedly, there was an age of the church, when the prieſthood preſided in aſſemblies, convened for the purpoſe of creating paſtors, and when the people regulated its choice, according to the ſuffrages of the clergy. But why do not our prelates, inſtead of ſtopping at intermediate periods, when the primitive forms were already changed, ſearch upwards to thoſe very elections, ſo contiguous to the cradle of Chriſtianity, when each city and each village had its pontiff, and when the people alone proclaimed and enthroned its ſpiritual paſtor? For it is neceſſary to obſerve, that the aſſociating the clergy to the elective aſſemblies, is dated from the diminution of the epiſcopal ſees, that is, that it owes its origin to the difficulty of re-aſſembling, the multitude of thoſe who belonged to a ſingle church.

"At this ſame period, when the prieſthood was the ſoul of the convocations for the election of miniſters, the poor and auſtere biſhops bore the greateſt part of the burthen of the religious miniſtry; the inferior prieſts were only their aſſiſtants; the biſhops were the only perſons who offered up the public ſacrifice, who preached the word to the faithful, who catechiſed the children, who carried the alms of the church into the hiding-place of the unfortunate *, who viſited the public aſylums for age, indigence, and infirmity, who traverſed with their bliſtered and venerable feet, the depths of the valley, and the ſharp ſum-

* *Bravo!*—More atheiſm.—It were a pleaſant thing to ſee a modern Welch biſhop perambulating the ſkirts of *Snowdon* or *Pen-maen-maûr*, peeping into the caverns of miſery (for he could not *talk* to her), and ſcattering the half-crowns of the charitable judiciouſly. W.

mit

mit of the mountain, for the purpoſe of diſpenſing knowledge and the comfort of the faith, amongſt the innocent inhabitants of the fields and of the villages. Here are facts exactly parallel to that of the influence of biſhops, over the election of ſpiritual paſtors. Now are ye for transforming theſe *facts* into ſo many points of eccleſiaſtical *law*, and pronouncing that the conduct of prelates, who preach not the comforts of the goſpel to their flock, and who travel in their ſumptuous chariots, is contrary to the eſſential conſtitution of the church * ? [*Repeated thunders of applauſe.*]

" The mode of election adopted by the National Aſſembly, is, then, the moſt perfect, ſince it is the moſt conformable

* This is, as *Pope* ſays,

" To goad the prelate ſlumbering in his ſtall." W.

to the proceedings in the time of the apoſtles, and nothing is ſo evangelical, and ſo pure, as what is derived from the high ſource of eccleſiaſtical antiquity.

" The criminal reſiſtance made by a multitude of prieſts, to the laws of their country, their obſtinate exertions, to revive the double deſpotiſm of the prieſthood and the throne, have alienated from them the confidence of their fellow-citizens, and they have not been, in theſe days, ſummoned in any great number, to thoſe bodies charged henceforward to proclaim the people's choice.

" But the time will arrive, when another generation of paſtors, attaching themſelves to the laws and to liberty, as to the ſource of their exiſtence and their real grandeur, ſhall regain that high reſpect, which conferred ſo much authority

on

on the prieſthood of the primitive church, and rendered its preſence ſo dear to thoſe majeſtic aſſemblies, where the hands of an innumerable people ſolemnly placed the ſacred tiara, upon the head of the moſt humble and moſt wiſe.

" Then ſhall unquiet diſtruſt and vexatious ſuſpicion diſappear; the confidence, the veneration, and the love of the poor, will open to the prieſts the gates of thoſe aſſemblies, as to the moſt reſpectable conſervators of the public mind, and of that patriotiſm which cannot be corrupted. It will be conſidered as an honour to pay a deference to their votes; for nothing is, in fact, more honourable for a nation, than to grant a great authority to thoſe whom its own choice, could not ſummon to the great offices of religion, without being

being fully ſenſible of the advantages of great talents, and of the merit of great virtues. Then ſhall the prieſthood and the empire, religion and the land, the ſanctuary of the holy myſteries, and the temple of liberty and the laws, inſtead of thwarting and juſtling one another, according to the intereſts by which men are divided, compoſe only one grand ſyſtem of public happineſs; and France ſhall teach the ſurrounding nations, that the goſpel and liberty are the inſeparable baſes of all true legiſlation, and the everlaſting foundation of the moſt perfect ſtate of man.

"Behold the ſalutary and glorious epoch, which the National Aſſembly hath thought proper to prepare, which will be accelerated by the knowledge and the virtues of the prieſthood, in concert with the

new

new laws, but which may be able alſo to ſubdue the prejudices, the paſſions, the reſiſtance of that prieſthood.

" Paſtors and diſciples of the goſpel, who calumniate the principles of the legiſlators of your country, do ye know what ye are doing? You are comforting impiety for thoſe inſurmountable obſtacles, which the law had oppoſed to the progreſs of its deſolating ſyſtem; and it is from you alſo that the enemies of Chriſtianity expect, on this day, the abolition of all worſhip, and the extinction of every ſentiment of religion. Imagine to yourſelves the partiſans of irreligion, calculating the gradations, by which the falſe zeal of the faith is conducting it to its ruin, and pronouncing in their circles the following diſcourſe:

" Our repreſentatives had replaced the

" edifice

" edifice of Chriſtianity, upon its ancient
" baſe, and our meaſures for overturning
" it were for ever diſconcerted. But what
" was to have given religion ſo great and
" ſo undiſturbable * an exiſtence, is now
" becoming the pledge of our triumph,
" and the ſignal of the downfal of the
" prieſthood and its temples. Look at
" thoſe prelates and thoſe prieſts, who are
" exciting, through every province of the
" kingdom, the ſpirit of inſurrection and
" rage; look at thoſe treacherous proteſts,
" in which they threaten with the flames
" of hell ſuch as receive the code of liber-
" ty; obſerve that affectation of beſtow-
" ing on the regenerators of the empire
" the atrocious character of the ancient
" perſecutors of the Chriſtians; obſerve

* No ſuch word in our dictionaries; but I don't care. W.

" thoſe

" thoſe prieſts and prelates unceaſingly
" deviſing means, for getting poſſeſſion
" of the public force, in order to em-
" ploy it againſt thoſe, who have deſpoiled
" them of their ancient uſurpations, in
" order to re-aſcend the throne of their
" pride, in order to cauſe that gold which
" was their ſcandal and their ſhame, to
" flow back once again into their palaces;
[*Murmurs from the right, which are ſoon drowned in the applauſe from the left.*]
" ſee with what ardour they miſlead the
" conſciences, alarm the piety of the ſim-
" ple, intimidate the weak, and how ea-
" gerly they exert themſelves to make the
" people believe, that the revolution and
" religion can never ſubſiſt together.

" Now, the people will at laſt believe
" it; and, wavering in the alternative of
" being Chriſtian or free, it will adopt that

" ſide

" ſide which will the leſs interfere, with
" its neceſſity for a reſpite from its ancient
" calamities. It will abjure its goſpel; it
" will curſe its paſtors; it will no longer
" deſire either to know or to adore, any
" other than the God who created nature
" and liberty. And then, whatever ſhall
" remind it of the God of the New Teſta-
" ment, will become odious in its eyes;
" it will no longer deſire to ſacrifice but
" upon the altar of its country; it will
" look upon its ancient temples but as
" monuments, which can ſerve only to
" witneſs, how long it was the ſport of
" impoſture, and the victim of untruth:
[*Murmurs from ſeveral parts of the hall.*]
" it will, therefore, no longer endure,
" that the price of its ſweat and blood,
" ſhould be applied to the expences of a
" worſhip which it rejects, and that an
" immea-

" immeaſurable portion of the public re-
" ſources, ſhould be aſſigned to a ſacerdo-
" tal conſpiracy. And behold how that
" religion, which hath reſiſted every
" ſhock of human controverſy, was deſ-
" tined to that grave which its own mi-
" niſters were digging for it!"

" Tremble, men of France, leſt theſe calculations of infidelity, be not founded upon the moſt alarming probabilities. Should it not be believed, that all thoſe who make it their ſtudy, to decry as wicked attempts upon the rights of religion, the proceedings of your repreſentatives in the organization of the ſacred miniſtry; ſhould it not be believed, I ſay, that their object and that of the infidel is the ſame; that they look forward to the ſame cataſtrophe, and that they have reſolved on the ruin of Chriſtianity, provided

vided they may be revenged, and that they have left nothing untried for the recovery of their power, and for the purpoſe of replunging you in your former ſervility? [*Applauſe from the left; the Abbé Maury makes a bow to the aſſembly, and withdraws, followed by ſeveral eccleſiaſtics: others drop off, one by one.*] that is, that the ſole difference which diſtinguiſhes, the irreligious doctrine of the eccleſiaſtical ariſtocracy, is, that the former doctrine pants after* the downfal of religion, only in order to ſecure more firmly, the triumph of the conſtitution and of liberty; and that the ſecond is ſtriding towards* the deſtruction of the faith, with no other hope than that of ſeeing it involve in its overthrow, the liberty and conſtitution of

* ſouhaite. † tend.

the

the empire. The one aſpires to ſee the faith extinguiſhed amongſt us, only from a belief, that it is an obſtacle to the complete deliverance of man; the other expoſes the faith to the greateſt dangers, with the deſign of raviſhing from you thoſe rights which you have re-acquired, and of enjoying once again your degradation and your miſery. In fine, the one deteſts religion, only becauſe ſhe appears to ſanction maxims favourable to tyranny, and the other voluntarily yields her up to all the hazard of a ſhock, from which ſhe expects the return of tyranny, and the revival of all abuſes. Thus the humane ſpirit which intermingles with the enterprizes of infidelity, againſt the goſpel diſpenſation, ſoftens, and in ſome meaſure induces us to pardon, the temerity and injuſtice which attend them. But what

apology could be offered, for the miſchiefs which our eccleſiaſtics are inflicting upon religion, with a view of replunging their fellow-citizens in woe, and of recovering an authority, the deprivation of which incenſes all their paſſions, and is at variance with all their habitudes?

"O you who are at peace with Heaven and with your conſciences; ye paſtors, who have hitherto heſitated to affix the ſeal of your oath, to the new civil conſtitution of the clergy, from no other motive than a ſincere dread of becoming accomplices in uſurpation, call to mind thoſe early times, when Chriſtianity, reduced to concentrate all her majeſty and all her treaſures, in the dark and ſilent cavern, exulted with ſo pure joy, when tidings came to announce to her auſtere and reverend pontiffs, the repoſe of the ſword

of perſecution; when the intelligence arrived, that a cruel reign was now no more, and that a wiſe and humane monarch had ſucceeded to the ſceptre; when they could venture, from the deep caves where they had conſecrated their altars, to go and comfort and confirm the meek piety of their diſciples, and to emit, from under ground, ſome few ſparks of that light divine, which they guarded as a precious depoſit. Now, let us ſuppoſe, that one of thoſe venerable men of Chriſt, iſſuing ſuddenly from the antique catacombs, where his aſhes are confounded with the remains of ſo many martyrs, were to come this day, to contemplate in the midſt of us, the glory with which religion here beholds herſelf ſurrounded, and were to diſcover, at one view, all thoſe temples, thoſe high towers, which ſhoot

aloft into air the glittering emblems of Chriſtianity, that croſs evangelical, which ſoars from the higheſt point, of every department of this great and illuſtrious empire—what a ſpectacle for the eyes of one, who, from his birth-day to his grave, had never beheld religion, but in the caverns of the foreſt and the deſert! What inexpreſſible delight! what tranſports! I think I hear him cry, as that ſtranger once did, on ſeeing the camp of the people of God: O ISRAEL, HOW BEAUTEOUS ARE THY TENTS! O JACOB, WHAT ORDER, WHAT MAJESTY IN THY PAVILIONS * !—

"Calm, then, O calm your apprhen-

* What painting, what imagery, what fervid and ſublime eloquence! I know of nothing of the kind in *Cicero* ſuperior to this paragraph. W.

ſions, ye miniſters of the God of peace and truth; bluſh at your inflammatory exaggerations, and no longer ſurvey our work through the medium of your paſſions. We are not aſking you to ſwear againſt the law of your hearts; [*Several members from the right ſtart up and cry*, This is ringing the alarm bell.] but we beſeech you, in the name of that holy God, who is one day to judge us all, not to confound human opinions and ſcholaſtic traditions, with the ſacred and inviolable ordinances of the goſpel. If it be contrary to morality to act againſt one's conſcience, it is equally ſo, to frame a conſcience upon falſe and arbitrary principles. The obligation to *make* a conſcience, is prior to the obligation to *follow* conſcience. Public evils of the greateſt magnitude, have been occaſioned by men,

who imagined that they were obeying God, and ſecuring their eternal ſalvation. [*Applauſe.*]

" And you, adorers of Chriſtianity and of your country, men of France, faithful and generous, but high-ſpirited and grateful people, would you judge of the great changes which have juſt regenerated this vaſt empire? Contemplate the contraſt between your former ſtate, and the ſituation which you are to enjoy henceforward. What was France but a few months ſince? Sages invoked the name of liberty, and liberty was deaf to their prayers. Enlightened Chriſtians aſked, whither had fled the auguſt religion of their fathers, and the true religion of the goſpel was no where to be found. [*Murmurs from the right, applauſe from the left.*] We were a nation without country, a people without

without government, and a church without character and diſcipline."

M. *Camus* exclaims: "One cannot liſten to this; I move that the aſſembly adjourn, that this buſineſs be referred to the eccleſiaſtical committee, and that nothing further be done here this day."

The members from the right crowd diſorderly through the hall; ſome move towards the table, others towards the tribune: ſome members too from the left quit their ſeats. For ſeveral minutes the aſſembly experiences a violent agitation.—Different perſons attempt to ſpeak—A general murmur drowns their voices.

M. *Régnault de Saint-Jean-d'Angely* was of opinion, that the matter ſhould be referred to the eccleſiaſtical committee, in order to undergo a new reviſion.

MIRABEAU.

" It is not merely the reviſion which ſhould be ordered, but the utter diſfiguration of the addreſs, againſt which this outcry hath been raiſed. One fact I ought to mention, which is, that ſince the ſecond and laſt reading, which it underwent in the eccleſiaſtical committee, I have not altered a ſingle word of my addreſs, no, not an iota. For my own perſonal juſtification, I demand that the addreſs be ſtated, as it actually is at this moment. It ought to be thoroughly known; there ſhould not be room even to ſuſpect an alteration; it contains not one line, not a ſingle expreſſion, for which

which I will not anſwer, on my honour, and with my head *."

Mirabeau depoſits his addreſs upon the table, and cauſes the ſecretaries tc ſign it.

The referring it to a committee was decreed by a great majority.

Mirabeau in continuation: "There was nothing regular and ſtable amongſt us, but the flagrancy of every vice, but the ſcandal of all injuſtice, but the public contempt of Heaven and of men, but the utter extinction of the laſt principles of religion and of morality. What a country! where every thing was at the abſolute diſpoſal of certain men without reſtraint, without honour, without know-

* Here I have been obliged to reverſe the original, in two particulars.—"Pas une expreſſion, pas une ligne, dont je ne repond ſur ma tête, et ſur mon honneur."—He ſhould have kept his *head* for the laſt ſtake. W.

ledge,

ledge, and in compariſon to whom, God and the human race were accounted nothing! And what a revolution that, which, on a ſudden, cauſes ſuch diſorder to be ſucceeded by a ſpectacle, where every thing is placed and ordered according to the ancient wiſh of nature, and where no longer reigns any diſſonance, but that occaſioned by the powerleſs rage, of certain hearts incapable of riſing to the loftineſs of patriotic ſentiments, and formed to continue grovelling in the meanneſs of their ſelfiſh paſſions!

" Men of France, you are the victors of your liberty, you have re-produced it in the boſom of this vaſt empire, by the grand exertions of your courage; it behoves you now to preſerve it, by your moderation and your wiſdom. Breathe around you the ſpirit of patience and of reaſon;

reaſon; pour the balm of fraternal conſolation into the hearts of thoſe of your fellow-citizens, from whom the revolution hath exacted mournful ſacrifices; and never forget that, if the regeneration of empires can be no otherwiſe accompliſhed than by the exploſion of the people's force, neither can it be otherwiſe preſerved, than by the recollection of the virtues of peace. Think that the repoſe and ſilence, of a nation victorious over ſo many efforts and conſpiracies, directed againſt her liberty and happineſs *, are alſo the moſt formidable ſpecies of reſiſtance, to that tyranny which would endeavour to overthrow her ramparts; and that nothing more effectually diſconcerts the deſigns of the malignant, than the tranquillity of noble hearts."

* Tranſpoſed---ſon bonheur, et ſa liberté.

Janu-

JANUARY 28, 1791.

Speech on the Meaſures relative to the external Defence of the State.

An almoſt univerſal alarm had been ſpread, concerning the external ſecurity of the ſtate, on account of the evident diſpoſitions of the powers of Europe, with regard to France.

The military and diplomatic committees, and the committee of reſearch, united in conſidering of means of defence.

M. *Lameth* preſented to the aſſembly meaſures applicable to all times, and which were calculated to form a general ſyſtem of the military force of France; the ſame member then propoſed the plan of a decree.

MIRA-

MIRABEAU.

"The diplomatic committee, in conjunction with that of war and that of researches, hath commiſſioned me to call your attention to an object, important from its being connected with the general tranquillity, namely, thoſe rumours of war, thoſe public alarms, which ſuſpicion credits, and which zeal alſo is diſſeminating; thoſe dangers, whatever they be, which it behoves us to appreciate by their reality, not by the impotent wiſh of thoſe who are enemies to this country; thoſe meaſures, in fine, which are compatible at once with our dignity and our intereſt: meaſures which policy alone makes it our duty to adopt, and which may reconcile what is due to credulity, to ignorance, and to prudence.

"To

"To an immenſe people, ſtill agitated by the movements of a great revolution; to new citizens, whom the firſt dawn of patriotiſm is uniting in the ſame notions, through every quarter of the empire, who, bound by the ſame oaths, ſentinels for one another, communicate rapidly all their hopes and all their fears, the bare exiſtence of alarms is perilous; and when meaſures of mere precaution, are adequate to quiet them, the inaction of the repreſentatives of a brave people were a crime.

"If the queſtion were only to inſpirit the men of France, we might ſay to them: Be more confident in yourſelves, and in the intereſts of your neighbours. Which country is the cauſe of your apprehenſions? The court of Turin will not ſacrifice a uſeful alliance, to reſentments, domeſtic or foreign. She will never disjoin her

her politics from her poſition; and the projects of cabal will be diſcomfited by her wiſdom.

"Switzerland, that land of freedom, Switzerland faithful to treaties, and almoſt French, will furniſh neither arms nor ſoldiers to that deſpotiſm which ſhe hath cruſhed; ſhe would be aſhamed to protect conſpirators, to countenance rebels.

"Leopold hath been a legiſlator, and his laws likewiſe had their detractors and their enemies. If he be poſſeſſed of numerous armies, he hath vaſt frontiers to defend. Were war his paſſion, although his reign hath commenced with peace, it is not towards the ſouth, that true policy would allow him to march his legions. Would he teach provinces ſtill fluctuating between an eſſay upon liberty, in which they have been diſappointed, and the prudence

dence of a ſubmiſſion, which will laſt only as long as it ſhall be ſupportable, how men, who, at home, have abaſed the pride of tyranny, can reſiſt the invaſive arm of a conqueror?

"Are you afraid of a few princes of Germany, who affect to think that the government of a ſovereign nation, ſhould be arreſted in the execution of her laws, out of reſpect for ſome privileged portions of their territories? But were their intereſts better aſſerted, by battles than by negotiations? and would they riſk the indemnification which your juſtice hath awarded to them? That, in barbarous ages, the feudal ſyſtem armed caſtles againſt caſtles, may be readily conceived; but that nations ſhould go to war, for the purpoſe of continuing a few villages in ſlavery, is what even they who throw

out

but ſuch threats, never entertained a thought of. Believe rather, that if the progreſs of our revolution gives diſquiet to our neighbours, that apprehenſion is a pledge, that they will not come to trouble us with dangerous provocations.

"Are ſome French refugees, ſome ſoldiers privately enliſted, the origin of your fears? But hath not the hatred of ſuch enemies been evaporating, to this day, in unavailing menaces? Where are their allies? What nation of any conſequence, will undertake the taſk of revenging them, will ſupply them with arms and with ſubſidies, will waſte, for their ſakes, the produce of her taxes, and the blood of her citizens?

"Will it be England?

"With reſpect to the other powers of Europe, it is ſufficient to penetrate the

probable views of cabinets; but when Great-Britain is in queſtion, we muſt liſten alſo to the voice of the nation. What have we to hope or to fear, from the Engliſh miniſtry? To lay now the grand foundations, of an eternal brotherhood between their nation and ours, were a profound ſtroke of politics, as virtuous as it is rare; to watch the courſe of events, to put himſelf in a condition to act a conſpicuous part, and perhaps to diſturb Europe, in order to avoid remaining idle, were the trade of an intriguer, who worries fame for a day's triumph*, ſince he hath not credit to live by a beneficent adminiſtration. What? will the Engliſh miniſter, placed between theſe two careers, enter on that which will produce ad-

* Fatigue la renommée un jour.

vantage without ſplendour, or on that which will be attended either with ſplendour or with calamity? I cannot tell, gentlemen; but this I know, that it were not prudent in a nation to depend upon political virtues and exceptions. I ſhall not, in this reſpect, ſeduce you into too great a ſecurity; but I ſhall not hold my tongue, at a juncture when ſome amongſt us are defaming the Engliſh nation, in conſequence of that pamphlet of a member of the Houſe of Commons, whom every admirer of great talents hath been afflicted at perceiving, amongſt the ſuperſtitious calumniators of human reaſon; I ſhall not bury in ſilence what I have derived from the moſt authentic ſources, namely, that the Engliſh nation rejoiced, when we proclaimed the great charter of humanity, diſcovered amongſt the ruins of the Baſtille; I ſhall

not conceal, that, if ſome of our decrees have ſhocked the epiſcopal or political prejudices of the Engliſh, thoſe very Engliſh have taken a pleaſure in applauding our liberty, becauſe they are well aware, that all free nations, form a league of mutual ſecurity againſt tyrants; neither ſhall I omit to mention, that, from the midſt of that nation ſo reſpectable at home, a terrible voice would iſſue, againſt miniſters who ſhould dare to undertake a ſavage cruſade, for the deſtruction of our new conſtitution; yes, from the boſom of that claſſic land of liberty, there would iſſue a volcano, ready to ſwallow up the guilty faction, which ſhould have attempted to try on us the infernal art of enſlaving nations, and of loading them again with the chains which they have broken. The

miniſtry

miniſtry would not deſpiſe this public ſentiment, which creates leſs noiſe in England, but which is as ſtrong, and more ſteady, than amongſt us*. It is not, then, an open war that I am inclined to fear: the embarraſſed ſtate of their finances, the ability of their miniſters, the generoſity of the nation, the enlightened men whom ſhe poſſeſſes in ſuch multitudes, aſſure me that no direct attempts will be made againſt us; but dark manœuvres, ſecret practices to excite diſunion, to balance parties, to play them off one againſt the other, to oppoſe the rapid progreſs of our proſperity, are what we have to fear from certain malignant politicians. They might

* Hath he not well contraſted the ſolid taciturnity of the Engliſh character, with the reſtleſs ſenſibility of the French? W.

hope, by favouring diſcord, by prolonging our political warfare, by giving hopes to the diſcontented, by irrationally permitting one of our ex-miniſters, to flatter thoſe malcontents with vague encouragement, by letting looſe upon us an outrageous writer, eaſily to be diſowned, becauſe he belongs to the oppoſition, they might hope, I ſay, to ſee us fall by degrees, into the ſtate of being equally diſguſted with deſpotiſm and liberty, to ſee us deſpair of ourſelves, to ſee us pine away ſlowly, to ſee us extinguiſhed by a political conſumption; and then, feeling no more anxiety as to an influence on our liberty, they would not have to dread that extremity ſo truly inſupportable to miniſters, of ſitting tranquil in the midſt of Europe *, of

* I confeſs, I do not altogether agree here with M. *Mirabeau*. Miniſters are not always to ſit idle ſpectators

of cultivating at home the peculiar means of their own happineſs, and of renouncing that proud buſtle, thoſe mighty ſtrokes of ſtate, which impoſe upon the world, becauſe few are able to judge of them, in order to apply themſelves plainly to the care of governing, of adminiſtering, of rendering the people happy; cares which delight them not, becauſe the nation at large can decide upon their value, and room is no longer left for impoſition *. Such might be the inſidious policy of the cabinet, without the participation, and even without the knowledge of the people of England; but ſuch policy is ſo baſe, that it

ſpectators of what is doing in Europe;—*the balance of power* is not ſuch a chimera, as ſome men ſeem to imagine. W.

* Or rather *ſtate quackery*;---la charlatanerie.---*Bravo!*

is impoſſible to impute it to any except an enemy to humanity, ſo narrow, that it is adapted to men of only the moſt vulgar minds, and ſo well known, that, in our days, it is little to be dreaded.

"Men of France, extend, then, your views beyond your frontiers; you will there ſee only neighbours, who, like you, have need of peace, and not of enemies; you will there find men, who, in caſe of unjuſt war, can no longer be led to battle, with the ſame facility as formerly: citizens, who, leſs free than ourſelves, conſider, in ſecret, the ſucceſs of our revolution, as an object of hope in which they themſelves are intereſted. Next, traverſe with your eyes the extent of this great empire, and, if you be poſſeſſed with the ſuſpicion of zeal, pay likewiſe ſome reſpect to that force which is peculiar to you. You are told,

told, that you have no army, while all your citizens are ſo many ſoldiers; that you have no longer any treaſure, when, at the ſlighteſt hint of danger, the fortunes of individuals would become the fortune of the ſtate; that a war might give a ſhock to your new conſtitution, as if the tents of a camp would not as ſoon become an aſylum, for the legiſlators of a people, who enacted its firſt laws in the Champ-de-Mars. Eh! what ſenſeleſs tyrant would expoſe himſelf, to conquer what he could not preſerve? When the majority of a nation is reſolved to continue free, is there any force that can hinder her from being ſo?

"Where, then, is the ſource of that anxiety, which, propagating itſelf through the realm, hath there called forth not only the energy and pride of patriotiſm, but likewiſe

likewiſe its impatience? Hath not zeal been exaggerating our danger? for there is an ambition to ſerve one's country, which may deceive the intentions of the beſt citizen, which may induce him to create opportunities of being more powerful, in order to be at the ſame time more uſeful; which may lead him to magnify his fears, becauſe he thinks himſelf a proper perſon to allay them; in fine, which may urge him to impart the firſt impulſe, towards an object to which his talents decoy him*, and which, from that ſole circumſtance, occaſions him to forget his diſcretion †.

" Perhaps

* Entraîné par ſon talent.

† Eminently prudent ſtateſman, yourſelf, who laboured to fortify your country, not only againſt the encroachments of royalty, and the inſidiouſneſs of faction,

" Perhaps, too, weary of their inability to diſturb the kingdom, the enemies of the revolution have miſtaken their wiſhes for their hopes, their hopes for realities, their menaces for an attack; and, conſoling themſelves with reveries of vengeance, have breathed inquietude amongſt a people, more capable of judging of their audacity than of their means.

" Perhaps alſo, ſome men of faction, who are looking for ſome chance of executing, under the noble name of liberty, certain ſchemes concealed from us, have hoped to find them in the midſt of a great popular agitation; and this conteſt of intrigue and ambition, againſt the generous

faction, but even againſt the well-meant, but miſchievous endeavours of patriots, whoſe judgments are led aſtray by vanity. W.

credulity

credulity of patriotiſm, is undoubtedly a ſpecies of war.

" In fine, ought we not to conſider, as one of the cauſes of the public alarm, that extravagant diſtruſt, which ſo long hath diſquieted every boſom, which retards the moment of peace, embitters our diſtreſſes, and becomes a ſource of anarchy, in ceaſing to be of uſe to liberty? We are in dread of foes without, and forget the foe who is ravaging the very bowels of the kingdom. Almoſt every where, the public functionaries, elected by the people, are at their reſpective poſts; its rights, then, are exercised; it remains for it to fulfil its duties. While overſeeing its commiſſioners, let it honour them with its confidence, and let the turbulent force of the many, yield to the calmer power of law.

Then,

Then, till the ſignal of danger be given by the public functionary, the citizen ſhall ſay: *My intereſts are taken care of;* for that is not true liberty, which lives in idle terrors; ſhe reſpects herſelf too much, to look on any thing as formidable *.

" However, gentlemen, if the fears of the public be extravagant, they are not therefore devoid of foundation. It is but too true, that there have been preparations, for an irruption of armed conſpirators by the frontiers of Savoy; that ſome men have been enliſted in Switzerland, for the French mal-contents; that attempts have been made for

* *Cicero* complains, that even the periods of *Demoſthenes* did not ſatisfy his ear. May I venture to obſerve, that *Mirabeau*, ſo happy in the conſtruction of his ſentences, fills the ear better than *Demoſthenes*, without falling into the redundancy of *Cicero?* W.

clandeſtinely introducing arms into the kingdom; that meaſures have been taken, and ſtill are taking, to draw certain princes of Germany into a quarrel which does not concern them, and to deceive them with regard to their true intereſts; in fine, that the refugees of France have agents, in ſeveral of the northern courts, for the purpoſe of decrying our conſtitution, the advantages of which ſufficiently avenge it of their outrages.

" All theſe circumſtances united, when compared with the force of a great people, were, perhaps, undeſerving of our attention. But we ought alſo to take into the account, the uncertainty even of prudence, the winding ways of falſe policy, and the obſcurity which ever partially envelopes what is to come. In fine, does not wiſdom direct us, to rouſe the courage

rage of even thoſe, who have ſuffered themſelves to be alarmed without reaſon?

" It is after having weighed every one of theſe conſiderations, that your committees move you, gentlemen, to adopt the following propoſals:

" To organize, for the ſtate of war, the national guards, and the auxiliaries; your military committee will point out to you the means:

" To determine what penſions ſhall be allowed to the ſeveral agents of the executive power, employed in foreign courts, in caſe of the appointment of ſucceſſors.

" In fine, to place upon a war footing, that diviſion of your army, which ſhall be cantoned in thoſe parts of the kingdom, with reſpect to which any fears have been entertained.

" Every one hath, for this long time, acknow-

acknowledged, and the miniſter for foreign affairs hath, more than once, repreſented to the diplomatic committee, the neceſſity of employing henceforward, in our tranſactions with foreign ſtates, men who will not bring into queſtion the power of the French nation, by doubting of our ſucceſs; men who are not, in ſome meaſure, ſtrangers to the new language of which they ought to be the organs, and who, whether it be that they are ignorant of the regeneration of their country, or that ancient prejudices combat with their duty, or that the inveterate habit of being the hirelings of deſpotiſm *, does not ſuffer them to reach the loftineſs of a ſyſtem of liberty, would be no more than agents of the miniſter, or

* De ſervir le deſpotiſme.

confidents

confidents of the ariſtocracy, and not the repreſentatives of a magnanimous people.

" But here it becomes neceſſary, it is at all times neceſſary, to reconcile intereſt with juſtice, and prudence with humanity. A long exerciſe of public functions, in a career where the fortune of an individual is often riſked, entitles him to an honourable proviſion; and your dignity will not ſuffer you to refuſe that recompenſe, even though you ſhould not owe it to his ſervices.

" With reſpect to the detaching a part of your military force, it is a debt that you muſt pay to opinion, which demands it. It is in order to prevent, at every the ſlighteſt danger, the neceſſity of ſummoning the entire nation into arms, from that labour which alone forms a nation, that you muſt detach a portion of

the public force, and embolden the citizen by the forecaſt of the law. Be under no apprehenſion, that our neighbours conſider the re-aſſembling of the troops, either as a menace, or as an event capable of inſpiring them with ſuſpicion. Our policy is frank and free, and we glory in it; but as long as the conduct of other kingdoms ſhall be enveloped in clouds, who can blame us for taking precautions adapted to maintain tranquillity? No, an unjuſt war can never become the crime of a people, that was the firſt to engrave upon the table of its laws, its utter renunciation of conqueſt. Invaſion is not to be apprehended from thoſe, who deſire rather to efface the limits of every empire, in order to form all mankind into one fraternal family, who would fain build an altar to peace, upon a mount compoſed

of all thoſe inſtruments of deſtruction, with which Europe is covered and defiled, and preſerve, for the ſole purpoſe of overawing tyrants, thoſe weapons which have been hallowed by the noble prize of liberty *."

After this follows the decree relative to the penſions already mentioned, and to the ſeveral complements of troops neceſſary for the protection of the kingdom.

PRESIDENTSHIP OF MIRABEAU.

Ffbruary 1, 1791.

Mirabeau preſident!—We will not ſay that it was an honour due to him; but we will be bold to ſay, that the National Aſſembly conferred an honour on itſelf,

* *Bravo!*

in calling him to that office. Should any, who are ſtrangers to the tactics, which, for ſo long a time, kept Mirabeau from the chair, be ſurpriſed at the boldneſs of our opinion, we would anſwer them thus: Either you look upon the preſidentſhip as the premium of ſervices rendered to the revolution, or you think that every member ſhould be ſummoned to it indifferently. In the firſt caſe, we have no occaſion to prove, that the name of Mirabeau ought to have been found at the head of the liſt of members, who have been elevated to the chair; in the ſecond caſe, we alſo ſhould experience ſome aſtoniſhment, that Mirabeau had been only the forty-fourth preſident.

February 10, 1791.

A deputation from the Quakers is introduced at the bar.

This ſect of perſecuted Chriſtians, which ſtill adheres to the ancient ſimplicity of the goſpel, a ſect, the religious principles of which inſpire an abhorrence of ſhedding blood, a ſect, in fine, with which a *yes* or a *no* is equivalent to an oath, was worthy of a maternal reception from the National Aſſembly.

MIRABEAU

TO THE DEPUTATION.

" The Quakers, who have fled from perſecutors and tyrants, could not but addreſs themſelves with confidence to legiſlators, who have been the firſt to digeſt the

rights of man into laws; and to France regenerated, France in the boſom of peace, an inviolable reſpect for which ſhe will continually recommend, and which ſhe wiſhes to all other nations, in order to become likewiſe a happy Penſylvania. As a ſyſtem of philanthropy, your principles are entitled to our admiration; they remind us, that the cradle of each ſociety, was a family united by its manners, by its affections, and by its wants. Indubitably, the moſt ſublime inſtitutions would be thoſe, which, effecting a ſecond creation of humankind, ſhould approximate to that prime and virtuous origin.

" An enquiry into your principles, conſidered as opinions, concerns not this aſſembly. We have made our declaration. The effuſions of the ſoul, the tranſports of the mind, are a property which none will

will conſent to enjoy in common; that ſacred domain exalts man into a hierarchy, more elevated than civil ſociety. As a citizen, he adopts a form of government; as a thinking being, he hath no country but the univerſe. Conſidered as a religious principle, your doctrine ſhall not become the object of our debates; the connection of each individual with him who dwells on high, is independant of all political inſtitutions; between God and the heart of man, what government ſhall dare to interpoſe? Conſidered as civil maxims, your claims muſt be ſubmitted to the diſcuſſion of the legiſlative body. It will examine, whether the form which you obſerve, in certifying births and marriages, give ſufficient authenticity to that filiation of the human ſpecies, which, independently of good morals, the diſtinc-

tions of property render indiſpenſable. It will inquire, whether an affirmation, the falſity of which would be ſubject to the puniſhment appointed for falſe witneſſes and perjurers, were not really a falſe oath.

" Eſtimable citizens, you deceive yourſelves; you have already taken that civic oath, which every man who deſerves freedom, hath conſidered rather as an act of rejoicing, than as a duty. You have not taken God to witneſs, but you have atteſted your conſcience, and is not an unſpotted conſcience likewiſe a cloudleſs Heaven? Is not that part of man an emanation of the Divinity? You ſay, moreover, that an article of your religion, prohibits you to carry arms, and to kill, under any pretence whatever. Undoubtedly, it muſt be a beauteous prin-

ciple of philoſophy, which enjoins, in ſome ſort, ſuch a tenet to human nature. But reflect, whether the defence of one's-ſelf, and of one's fellow-creatures, be not likewiſe a religious duty. Would you, then, have bowed the neck to tyranny? Since we have acquired liberty for you and for ourſelves, on what grounds ſhould you refuſe to preſerve it? Had your brethren of Penſylvania been leſs remote from the ſavages, would they have ſuffered their wives, their children, and their old men to be maſſacred, rather than make any exertion to repel the fierce invader; and are not ſtupid tyrants, and ferocious conquerors, equally ſavage as the roving Indian of America?

"The aſſembly will, in its wiſdom, diſcuſs all your demands; and whenever I meet a Quaker, I will ſay to him: Friend,

Friend, if thou haſt a right to be free, thou haſt a right to hinder any from making thee a ſlave. Since thou loveſt thy fellow-creature, do not leave him to be butchered by the hand of deſpotiſm; it were as if thou thyſelf wert his deſtroyer. Thou deſireſt peace; but it is weakneſs which calleth for war; univerſal reſiſtance were univerſal peace.—The aſſembly inviteth ye to be preſent at its deliberations."

Many and reiterated teſtimonies of applauſe had frequently interrupted this reſponſe; at its concluſion they recommenced with double vigour.

March 22, 23, 24, and 25, 1791.

Theſe four days were devoted, for the moſt part, to the debates upon the plan of a law reſpecting the regency.

This plan gave riſe to ſeveral queſtions. We ſhall confine ourſelves to reporting thoſe, which contained the greateſt number of difficulties, and upon which Mirabeau declared his opinion.

Firſt queſtion. Shall the regency be hereditary or elective?

Second queſtion. In caſe the minor king ſhould have no kindred, poſſeſſed of all the requiſite qualifications, ſhall the election be made by an electoral body, or ſhall the regent be appointed by the legiſlature *?

Third

* I apprehend that they have here uſed the word *legiſlature* improperly; for, until a regent be elected, there

Third queſtion. At what age ſhall the minor king be impowered to take his ſeat in the council?

Meſſieurs Mirabeau, Cazalés, and the Abbé Maury, were for adjourning.

MIRABEAU.

" If I am inclined to an adjournment, it is not that I think with M. Cazalés, that the queſtion of the regency involves a number of others, which will call for ample diſcuſſion. It is true, that, not having been able to meditate upon this plan, as I was extremely indiſpoſed, [*Murmurs*] I have not yet made up my

there can be no complete legiſlature.—*Mirabeau*, in a former ſpeech, was very angry with M. *Barnave* for terming the legiſlative body, the legiſlative *power*; the king being intitled to a *veto*. W.

mind

mind upon it. [*Murmurs again*] Since you ſeem ſo deſirous of it, I muſt tell you, that you yourſelves alſo have not ſufficiently conſidered it. My opinion was, that a plan of a law, containing ſeveral pages, and which you have not been able to compare with the foundations, might appear to an aſſembly ſo wiſe as this is, to be worthy of not being decided on at this moment. I have no objection to your proceeding to a diviſion, if I am miſtaken in this point, namely, that you cannot comprehend in an inſtant, a plan amounting to eight pages; [*More murmurs.*] I have no objection to my being prevented from making an obſervation, with reſpect to the firſt article. I differ from M. Cazalés. He is wrong in ſuppoſing, that we may declare it impoſſible for the regent, in any ſenſe, to be charged with the guardian-

ſhip

ſhip of the royal minor; the regent being the inſtrument of the kingly office, and therefore bound to a univerſal ſuperintendancy. The plan of the committee is more conformable to the principles. The complexion which M. Cazalés ſeems deſirous of giving to it, appears to me leſs rational, and alſo ill expreſſed. With regard to the various articles contained in the plan, there are ſome conſiderable chaſms which ought to be filled up. But my firſt conceptions are never of much value, in my own eyes; judge what they are likely to prove in the opinion of others."

The aſſembly decreed, that the diſcuſſion ſhould take place on that very day: accordingly, the battle began.

M. Barnave thought with the committee, that the regency being ſubſidiary to the kingly office, nay, an intermediate royalty,

royalty, it ought to be eſtabliſhed upon the very ſame principles, and, therefore, that the regency ſhould have the ſame unity as the royalty.

The opinion of the Abbé Maury, tending to render the regency elective, muſt have ſurpriſed the left ſide of the hall.

MIRABEAU.

" It appears to me, that, from the claſhing of opinions, there is one queſtion which ought to be determined, as a preliminary to all further debate. M. Barnave wiſhes the regency to be hereditary, like the royalty. The Abbé Maury is for having it elective. I confeſs, that I have been aſtoniſhed, at ſeeing the ſame arguments applied, without any examination, to the heirſhip of the regency, which determined

mined you to decree that the monarchy ſhould be hereditary. Why hath the monarchy been declared hereditary, notwithſtanding the incommenſurable diſadvantages of ſuch a form? It was becauſe the diſadvantages attending an elective monarchy, were, perhaps, ſtill greater *, and more formidable to public tranquillity and ſocial order. But if theſe diſadvantages are not to be found, in the circumſcribed, the very circumſcribed election † of a regent, why endeavour to avoid them, by introducing thoſe of heirſhip? Why accept a regent from the hands of

* It is the opinion of Lord *Bolingbroke*, that many ſucceſſive reigns of virtuous princes, could not compenſate for the miſchiefs occaſioned by one election. W.

† L'élection très-circonſcrite.—May not the repetition of the adjective produce a beauty?

chance?

chance? This grand queſtion, whether the regency ſhall be hereditary or elective, ought, therefore, to be previouſly decided. It is my wiſh that the diſcuſſion be reduced to this point. [*Applauſe.*] I would next aſk leave to ſpeak, for the purpoſe of enquiring, whether the regency ſhould be elective, and whether there be good reaſons for accepting a regent from the hand of chance.

M. Barnave combated with ſucceſs, the opinion which Mirabeau had rather intimated than pronounced. It was his wiſh, that, in the caſe, which muſt very rarely happen, of an election, for want of a regent by right of birth, the election ſhould be in the legiſlature, and not in an electoral body, as was propoſed by the committee. M. Barnave was ſtruck with the dangerous expedient, of aſſembling and

placing eight hundred electors, beſide the legiſlative body.

MIRABEAU.

"Since no oppoſition is made to the ſtating the preliminary queſtions, I mean not to anticipate the deciſion, for I have not yet formed my opinion; and it is not after having complained, of the haſte ſhewn by the aſſembly to diſcuſs a matter of this nature; it is not after having invoked the illumination of debate, that it would prove agreeable to me to enter into one. [*Murmurs from ſeveral quarters.*] I ſhall anſwer, like a man who is as little likely to be ſtunned by applauſe as by murmurs, that I have a reſpect for forcible objections, and that I even ſet ſome value upon ſpecious ones, ſince they compel one to look again into one's ſelf, and to meditate;

meditate; but I ſhall make a few obſervations, upon what hath been hazarded by the member who ſpoke laſt, and who ſeemed deſirous of prejudging the queſtion. And firſt, as to the fact alleged by that gentleman, I anſwer, that it does not exiſt, and that the aſſembly having as yet come to no reſolution, with reſpect to the inviolability of the regent, with reſpect to the identity of the functions, the rights, and the duties, aſſigned to the regency and to the royalty, it cannot be ſaid, that the identity of the regency and the royalty, obliges us to render the former hereditary, like the latter. As to what regards the criſis, of which ſo terrifying a picture hath been drawn, in the caſe of an election, I anſwer, that it is what all regencies, all minorities are expoſed to. The vacancy of the throne, the mi-

nority of a prince, is at all times a grand criſis in political affairs; but then, it is unavoidable, and is but little to be feared, in a well-conſtituted government.

"I come now to the third objection; and I declare, that it ſeems to me to deſerve to be ſifted in every particular, becauſe it is rational, and, in ſome points of view, even weighty. Unqueſtionably, an elective regent would win more favour than one hereditary, becauſe the choice reſulting from reflection and from confidence, confers, and ought to confer more credit than that of chance. This objection, then, ſhould be examined; but it derives no weight, from the examples juſt quoted by the member who ſpoke before me. In the moral and political ſhocks which we have experienced, for theſe two years paſt, two, three, or ten men, had they formed

the projects which have been matter of ſuppoſition, would, in caſe of ſucceſs, have only arrived a little ſooner, and with a little more certainty, at the gallows.—Since mention hath been made of Cromwell, I ſhall relate a witticiſm of that uſurper, who ſo well underſtood both men and things, ſince he had formed ſo ſtrong an intereſt, and had given to that intereſt ſo powerful a direction. He was paſſing along, attended by Lambert * his truſty companion; acclamations and *bravo* reſounded from every ſide. Lambert was delighted to enthuſiaſm at this reception. Cromwell, that great ſearcher of the human heart, ſaid, in order to humble his friend's vanity: *They would huzza us much more, if we were mounting the ſcaffold.*

* Mirabeau calls him *Lambel.* W.

"Gentlemen, do not imagine, that when a conſtitution is made, a great, and, eſpecially, a durable intereſt, can be derived from a momentary criſis; and be aſſured, that in an affair of this nature, as in every other, one reaps nothing different from what one hath ſown. While I was ſpeaking, and expreſſing my firſt ideas upon the regency, I heard ſeveral ſay, with that agreeable deciſiveneſs *, to which my ears have been long accuſtomed: *This is abſurd, this is extravagant, this is not fit to be mentioned.* For my part, I declare that I know, in this aſſembly, ſome very worthy citizens, ſome very enlightened minds, who entertain great doubts upon the queſtion, and who are preparing to ſupport the plan of an elec-

* Indubitabilité.—Our language does not enable me to imitate this word. W.

tive

tive regency. I thence infer, that the queſtion ought to be ſtated, ſo as to be capable of undergoing the neceſſary diſcuſſion, and that, when any thing is propoſed, of what nature ſoever it be, before we cry out: *This is abſurd, this is extravagant, this is not fit to be mentioned*, it behoves us to reflect well upon it, a mode of conduct which, be the ſtate of the queſtion what it may, never proves of any diſſervice."

The diſcuſſion of the queſtion, whether the regency ſhould be elective or hereditary, now aſſumes a more determinate character. We lament our not having it in our power to analyſe the ſpeeches of orators, who have developed principles on the oppoſite ſide.

M. *Pethion* was againſt the project of

the committee, as to what concerned the hereditary regency.

MIRABEAU.

"I ſaid, yeſterday, in this aſſembly, that my opinion upon the preſent queſtion was not yet formed; nevertheleſs, the evening papers have eagerly ſet forth, that I had preached an elective regency; but who cares for the evening papers? let us proceed to the queſtion.

"Shall the regency be hereditary or elective, or rather (for a regent does not ſucceed any thing, and accordingly the expreſſion, *hereditary regency*, is improper) ſhall the regency be fixed invariably, or ſhall we only determine the mode in which the regency ſhould be formed?

Such

Such is the true queſtion, in which I have perceived, as well as on ſeveral other occaſions, that many miſtake their own horizon for the boundaries of the world. I am going to examine, whether there be not ſome new aſpects, in which it may be conſidered, if it be true, that, in every hypotheſis, it concerns the ſafety of the monarchy, and can alter the regular form of the government; whether a friend to the conſtitution ought not to perceive, that this queſtion poſſeſſes a factitious importance only, ariſing from our decrepit ideas * of the old government; in fine, if it be a matter of indifference, whether a regent be good or bad, and this would very much ſimplify the queſtion.]*Murmurs.*] And firſt, there is a grand aſpect,

* Vieilles idées.

under

under which the queſtion hath been neither viewed nor preſented. Not a few philoſophers, meditating upon the royalty, have conſidered hereditary monarchy, as the ſacrifice of one family to the liberty of all the reſt; every perſon in the ſtate ſhould be free, that ſingle family excepted. The gulph of anarchy is dug by faction and ambition; Decius leaps into it *; the chaſm cloſes up: and this is the type of royalty according to the theory juſt mentioned.

" The ſyſtem of the indiviſibility of the privilege, to which all are ſummoned,

* It was *Curtius* rather.—*Mirabeau* quotes from memory, both in profane and ſacred ſtory: the facts, and the ſpirit of them, were forcibly impreſſed upon his mind, although now and then he confounds perſonages. W.

and

and which ſeparates the whole family from the nation, ſhould ſeem to countenance the opinion, that the nomination of the regent ſhould be veſted in the family. The right of the neareſt relation takes place, at the death only of the monarch; the queſtion, then, is, to fill up the vacancy; whereas, in the caſe of a regency, the queſtion is not, to ſupply the place of the exiſting king, although an infant, but to fill up the kingly office; and this is a different caſe from the other. The royalty belongs to the family, the family is to exerciſe it. Grand words produce no alteration in the nature of things, and the regency, after all, is nothing more than a guardianſhip.

" Second ſyſtem. Every king might himſelf be obliged to name a regent, in his life-time, as ſoon as he ſhould have a male

a male child, or even as ſoon as the queen ſhould be pregnant. We might, partly, prevent, by that meaſure, the miſchiefs reſulting from chance and from an election, and public opinion would incline the monarch to make choice of the moſt worthy. Our hiſtory provides us with ſeveral examples of regents appointed by our kings. It was only by teſtament that kings diſpoſed of the regency; and therein lay the fault; they ſhould have made the diſpoſition in their life-time.

" Third ſyſtem. Amongſt the known modes of election, a multitude of inconveniencies might be prevented, by allowing it to be lawful for the regent elected, to be periodically confirmed in his office, or caſhiered; for the making a good choice is the object of the election.

" Is there, then, no mode of election exempt

exempt from inconveniencies? is the ſubject exhauſted? is it perfectly clear, that the true election by the people, is expoſed to the ſame inconveniencies as that made by a handful of ariſtocrates? And is it drawing a juſt compariſon, to liken, for inſtance, the elections of Poland, that republic where one hundred thouſand gentlemen, all electors and eligible, keep five or ſix millions of men in ſlavery, is it juſt to liken ſuch elections, to thoſe which may be ordered and determined in an empire covered with five-and-twenty millions of freemen, armed for the purpoſe of making their will reſpected, by factions internal and external? I might quote a hundred other modes, and likewiſe canvaſs the queſtion of a council of regency, appointed as a parallel juriſdiction to that of regent. But all this is not

the

the queſtion; let us conſider it in itſelf, as it ſtands connected with the nation, with the king, with the conſtitution. To chance are we indebted for kings, and many common-place topics, more or leſs bombaſtic, might here be introduced. Let us confine ourſelves to making two obſervations, a little more ſubſtantial. Chance will often prove ſo blind, as to occaſion us to lament our inability to correct it by election. I need ſuppoſe only two miſchiefs, in order to make myſelf underſtood; ſhould we deſire to have for regent, the weak, or guilty, or miſguided man, whom the law might ſummon to that ſtation?

"This is not all; let us lay our account, for the poſſibility of a regency becoming a reign of nineteen years, that is, a reign of no inconſiderable duration; that,

that, when a king ſhall be a toothleſs infant *, the neareſt relation ſhall be, perhaps, an old man, "ſans teeth, ſans taſte, ſans eyes, ſans every thing †," and that it will be a circumſtance truly ridiculous, not to wiſh to chooſe a man, in preference to two children. Providence preſents us with weak, ignorant, or even wicked kings; but, ſhould we have a wicked regent, we ſhall have to blame ourſelves. So far, as to the nation. And now, gentlemen, for the king, who is the man of the nation, and to whom, accordingly, ſhe owes a double protection. Would you conſult the paſt? our future hiſtory will certainly be leſs tempeſtuous, than that of our late monarchy, where

* Viendra à peine de naître.

† Dans une enfance non moins inactive que celle du roi.

all

all the powers were confounded. Nevertheleſs, many ſimilar circumſtances may yet be reproduced. Now, how many caſes are there, in which it would be dangerous, that the neareſt kinſman to the crown ſhould be regent? When one does not examine this queſtion very cloſely, one is at firſt ſtruck with this idea; ſince the neareſt kinſman might be king, why ſhould he not be regent? But there is a ſenſible difference between theſe two caſes; a king hath no other connection than with the people, and it is by ſuch connection only that he ought to be judged. A regent, on the contrary, although he be not charged with the wardſhip of the minor king, is connected with him in a multitude of points, and may, moreover, be his enemy; he may have been the enemy of the father. It

hath

hath been ſaid, that a regent, borne up by popular favour, to which he may have owed his election, might dethrone the king. Take care that this objection hold not with ſtill greater force, againſt the neareſt relation. The former could ſucceed no otherwiſe, than by changing the form of government: he might have in oppoſition to him the ſober part of the nation, and all the other members of the royal family. The latter, on the contrary, in order to mount the throne even by virtue of the law, would have but one obſcure crime to anſwer for, and would have nothing then to fear from competitors. Of what ſignification is it, that the wardſhip of the king is not entruſted to him? hath he more than one ſtride to make?

" But here are other objections, drawn from the very nature of our conſtitution.

Does not the true theory of government conduct us to an elective regency? When a king is a minor, the royalty does not ceaſe; it becomes inactive; it ſtops, like a watch the ſpring of which is broken *. The maker of the watch muſt reſtore its moving power. The more one ſearches into the ſyſtem of election, the more it is found conformable to genuine principles. A regent is but a functionary of the public. Is it the ſpirit of our new conſtitution, that every public function ſhould be elective, except the royalty? It is ſtill more the ſpirit of our conſtitution, that equality ſhould be reſpected whereſoever ſhe can exiſt. Now, an elective regency would preſerve a kind of equality †,

* Qui a perdu ſon mouvement.

† In the original, it is the reverſe—" inégalité"—Does not the ſenſe bear me out in the alteration I have ventured to make? W.

amongſt the members of the royal family. Again; a regent is, in reality, nothing elſe than a prime miniſter unremovable for a certain time; for, during the regency, all is done in the king's name: now, when a minor king is incapable of chooſing his own miniſter, to whom does the choice belong, if not to the legiſlative body? The order of ideas, then, conducts us to this concluſion, and, conſequently, to the ſyſtem of election. You have already ſeen what inconveniencies attend the adverſe ſyſtem. Advert now to the national advantages, accompanying the theory of elections. Monteſquieu hath well remarked, that, during a certain period of our hiſtory, our kings were elective; but, in the royal family, the kingly office had not ceaſed to be hereditary. Such an election was rather a right of excluſion, than of election. Now,

is it advantageous to the nation, that, in certain caſes, the legiſlative body may indirectly exclude, and that it may elect? More talents are requiſite in a regent, than in a king. The former naturally inſpires us with leſs reſpect, and perhaps it is owing to that very circumſtance, that almoſt every regency hath been tempeſtuous *. Now, by election, we ſhould

* The miniſter of a regent is in a much more trying ſituation, than the miniſter of a king. The ſervant of a ſervant is generally hated, when entruſted with the exerciſe of authority.—It is ſomewhat ſingular, that, in the three laſt regencies of France, the chief miniſters were none of them natives of the kingdom. Mary of Medicis confided in *Concini*, Anne of Auſtria in *Mazarine*, the godleſs Duke of Orleans in Mr. *Law*, the Scotchman. It hath been remarked, however, that female ſovereigns are moſt apt to make choice of able miniſters: "I have choſen my lord treaſurer," ſaid queen Elizabeth, "not for his bad legs, but for his good "head." W.

have the means of proviſionally entruſting the exerciſe of the royalty, to ſuch members of the ſame family as ſhould ſeem moſt worthy of the truſt: we ſhould thus be enabled to give an important leſſon to the royal minor, by diſplaying before him, under the title of regent, the pattern of a good king; but this becomes alſo a ruinous advantage for the nation. If ſome reigns of virtuous princes, thinly ſcattered through the ſpace of ages, have preſerved this earth from being undone by the rage of deſpotiſm, what might not be expected, for the amelioration of humankind, from a few virtuous adminiſtrations following cloſe* upon one another.

" Were it not likewiſe very uſeful, to demonſtrate to that family, placed in ſome degree on the outſide of ſociety, that its

* Rapprochées.

privilege is not ſo firm, but that the diſpoſal of it may ſometimes depend on the will of the nation? That family might even be the better, for adopting ſuch an opinion; for, as each reign could offer to each of them a tranſitory kingſhip, they would all endeavour to prepare themſelves for it, to render themſelves worthy of it; they would all take pains to acquire the good opinion of the public, and to learn the duties of a king. It appears to me, moreover, that an election for a regency would remind us, at certain periods, of the true origin of the royalty. And it is good, that neither the king, nor the people ſhould forget it.

" The elective ſyſtem, therefore, is very ſuitable to us, gentlemen, and even very plauſible, very favourable, notwithſtanding

ſtanding the levity with which, at firſt view, it hath been treated.

" This queſtion, conſidered in the elective point of view, hath one great diſadvantage, in being diſcuſſed for us and amongſt us. Sleeping ſecurely * on hereditary royalty, and almoſt incorporated with it, by cuſtom of the longeſt date, we have acknowledged it as pre-exiſtent to the conſtitution, we have not even turned our thoughts to election, becauſe we have no occaſion for it. But, aſſuredly, although it be not neceſſary for us to ſolve this problem, it does not follow that the problem cannot be ſolved.

" What? ſhould we introduce into an inſtitution, which would not involve the avowed inconveniencies attending on

* Aſſoupis.

elections, the inconteſtable inconveniencies of heirſhip?

"But, gentlemen, it is time to preſent to your obſervation, the common ſource of all the errors upon this ſubject, and eſpecially the extravagant importance aſcribed to the different opinions, which have been ſubmitted to your view. We ſee always, in a king, and in a regent, what thoſe errors were. The former, almoſt the ſole agent of all the good and all the evil, which may befal a great nation, in the courſe of a long reign; the latter an abſolute monarch for ſeveral years. But all this is now no more; in a country which can boaſt of a conſtitution, in a country where public liberty is built upon good laws, and upon the reſpect paid to thoſe laws, a king is no more than the ſupreme executor of ſuch laws, continually reſtrained

reſtrained as well as protected by them, continually watched as well as ſupported, by the multitude of good citizens who compoſe the public force. There alſo a regent, who is only a regent for a certain number of years, is, at bottom, no more than a prime miniſter, after the moſt auguſt and moſt elevated faſhion. Undoubtedly, there ſtill exiſts ſubject matter for intrigue; there exiſts, and there ever will exiſt, a great deal of it, for places, and for employments in the various offices; but there is no food left for faction. When this word is mentioned, upon ſuch an occaſion, we think of the Orleanſes, of the Condés under Charles VII. of the Montmorencies and the Guiſes under Francis II. and we forget to think that, in a country where the king is no longer abſolute,

abſolute, there can no longer be an abſolute regent.

" Then falls to the ground every objection againſt a regent, the child of popular favour, who, ſoon after aſſuming the character of an uſurper, the ſucceſsful rival of all lawful authority, attempts in one moment to ſubvert the conſtitution, trample on all the laws, and this amidſt the applauſe and the huzzas of that very nation, whoſe favour and eſteem exalted him to a poſt, which, like every other, hath its limits, its overſeers, its enviers, and its enemies. All this is extravagant, all this is irreconcileable to reaſon. On the other hand, it appears to me, that, the choice of a regent being in itſelf a matter of indifference, we had better follow the bent of our inclinations, of our habitudes,

and

and fix the regent beforehand, and in a form that ſhall not vary; and, to ſum up in a few words the advantages which have been ſhewn to you; 1. To decree, that the delegation of the regency to the neareſt relation, is conſonant to received ideas; 2. That it were, perhaps, dangerous, to exhibit the ſpectacle of an elective regency, beſide an hereditary royalty; 3. That the relation neareſt to the throne is to be ſuppoſed better prepared, for performing the functions of the kingly office; 4. That he will be more intereſted in preventing its degradation, than any other member of the family, inaſmuch as he will be nearer to the enjoyment of it. I am, therefore, of opinion, that the plan of the committee may be adopted. [*Murmurs.*]

Upon this firſt queſtion, the aſſembly delegated

delegated * the regency, in the direct line, to the nearest male relation of full age, according to the order of the heirship to the throne.

The fourth article of the plan, relative to the conditions necessary in order to become regent, made no mention of taking an oath: it was required that this condition should be added.

M. *Montlausier* called for a division, as a prince might have reasons for not having taken the oath: he might have been beyond sea—

MIRABEAU.

"I am afraid that the member who spoke last is mistaken; he hath talked of beyond sea; perhaps he meant to say,

* Article III. of the decree.

beyond

beyond the Rhine." [*This produced a laugh, and the applauſe of the aſſembly.*]

The ſecond queſtion was then agitated, namely, whether the election ſhould be made by means of an electoral body, or whether the regent ſhould be appointed by the legiſlature.

MIRABEAU.

"I do not aſk leave to diſcuſs this queſtion, ſince it is not my turn to ſpeak, and ſince I have a conſideration to offer, which tends to put off the diſcuſſion. I think the mode recommended in the plan, unacceptable in every reſpect. I know not what is meant, by electors aſſembled for the purpoſe of appointing other electors, upon an occaſion equally unimaginable.

ble. Beſides, there are enormous inconveniencies to be apprehended, from tranſforming, under any pretence whatever, a legiſlature into an electoral body. This appears to me derogatory to every principle.

"In this alternative, it is allowed on all hands, that there is no urgent neceſſity for coming to an immediate determination. We have time enough to look out for a mode, which may accord with the wiſhes of every one. But when the committee itſelf almoſt abandons its own mode of election, when, at leaſt, it feels much diffidence upon that head, perhaps it might be found, that the wiſeſt courſe were to adjourn this particular queſtion, and to proceed in our examination of the reſt of the plan."

It was thought that the mode could not be

be taken into conſideration, until they had decreed the principle upon the queſtion, whether the legiſlative body ſhould ſay yes or no.

This propoſition was admitted, and the aſſembly decided *, that, in the caſe where it ſhould become neceſſary to elect a regent, ſuch election ſhall not be delegated to the legiſlature.

The nineteenth article of the committee fixed the time of the king's taking his ſeat in the council, at the age of fourteen years, without a deliberative voice.

M. *Deſmeuniers* propoſed leaving out the words, *without a deliberative voice*, and ſubſtituting, in their place, the words, *for his inſtruction*.

* Article VI.

MIRA-

MIRABEAU.

"Let us trouble ourſelves no further about the time which ſhall be fixed, for the royal minor's becoming a member of the council; let us not fix upon the age of fourteen, in preference to fifteen; unleſs we likewiſe decree, that nothing ſhall be agitated there, but ſtories about Tom Thumb and Jack the Giant-killer *. Let us ſay merely, that the royal child ſhall be admitted into the council, as ſoon as the regent ſhall think proper." [*Murmurs.*]

M. *Lapoule.* I aſk leave to ſpeak, in

* Fariboles.—It hath been ſufficiently evident, in a former oration, how much *Mirabeau* diſliked the idea of admitting raw ſtriplings, as members of aſſemblies for ſolemn debate. W.

order

order to combat the propoſition of M. Mirabeau.

Mirabeau. "Since M. Lapoule is inclined to combat my propoſition, I withdraw it." [*More murmurs.*]

M. *Lapoule.* The humility of M. Mirabeau is always attended with ſucceſs. Since he withdraws his propoſition, I move that the article be worded in this manner:

Article XIX. The king having attained the age of fourteen years complete, ſhall be preſent at the council for his inſtruction only. [*Applauſe.*]

This amendment was adopted.

The twenty-firſt article of the plan propoſed, that the king being of full age, ſhould announce, by proclamation made through the whole kingdom, that he had attained his majority, and that he had

entered upon the exercise of the royal functions.

MIRABEAU recommended, that the legislative body being assembled, the king should repair thither, in order to take the oath, and that then the legislative body should cause proclamation to be made.

The assembly adopted the article of the committee, with this addition, "that the proclamation shall contain the king's oath, with a promise to repeat it in presence of the legislative body, as soon as the latter shall be assembled."

APRIL 2, 1791.

DEATH OF MIRABEAU.

We left Mirabeau in the tribune, and already he hath terminated his brilliant

career; in the midſt of the moſt aſtoniſhing revolution that ever the ſun beheld, a premature death hath ſnatched him from his country, from liberty, from the happineſs of mankind. One of the chief founders of the conſtitution of this kingdom, he was become her chief hope. Eloquent ſpeaker, ſublime writer, profound politician! his genius, after having effected the revolution, had forced his enemies to admiration or to ſilence. Could any other man than Mirabeau, have reſtored France to that ſituation, which ſhe had loſt under a government both verſatile and abſurd?—A deep diſquietude agitated the citizens, regret and ſadneſs were depicted in every face; his death was conſidered as a public calamity.

The preſident, M. Tronchet, deſired leave to ſpeak—A mournful preſage ex-

torted from his colleagues theſe afflicting words: *Ah! he is no more.*

He died this morning at half after eight. I will not recal to your memory, ſaid M. Tronchet, the applauſe which you have ſo repeatedly beſtowed upon his talents; he hath a much nobler title to our grief, and to the tears which we ſhall ſhed upon his ſepulchre.

[*A melancholy ſilence reigns throughout the aſſembly.*]

M. *Barrere*: Mirabeau is dead;—the great ſervices which he hath rendered to his country, and to humankind, are well known; the ſorrows of the public are echoed on every ſide; ſhall not the National Aſſembly, alſo, teſtify its ſorrow, with a ſolemnity becoming the occaſion? It is not on the brink of that grave which

is preparing for him, that I call upon you to exhibit the vanity of human pomp *; it belongs to public opinion, it belongs to poſterity, to aſſign him that place of honour which he hath merited; it is for his colleagues to conſign their juſt regret, to the authentic monument of their labours. I move that the aſſembly, record upon the journals of this diſaſtrous day, a teſtimony of its grief for the loſs of that great man; and that all the members of the aſſembly, be invited in their country's name, to be preſent at his obſequies.

This ſpeech was pronounced in a faultering voice. Very many of the deputies mingled their tears with thoſe, which ſtreamed from the eyes of the ſpeaker.

An eccleſiaſtic from the right, moved,

* Vaines diſtinctions.

that the aſſembly ſhould order the work of M. Mirabeau upon the ſucceſſions, to be printed. Yeſterday, ſaid M. de Beaumetz, he deſired, in the midſt of his ſufferings, that the biſhop of Autun ſhould be brought to him; and, delivering that work to the biſhop, he requeſted, as a final mark of friendſhip, that he would read it to the aſſembly. I have no doubt that the biſhop of Autun is eager to perform that ſacred duty; and I do not imagine that any member will object, to his exerciſing, in this place, the office of executor to the great man whom we all deplore.

The preſident gave notice that a motion had been made, for ſending a deputation to the funeral of M. Mirabeau. *We will all go, all,* was the animated anſwer*.

* S'eſt on écrié.

The

The aſſembly then unanimouſly decreed, that its affliction ſhould be recorded on the journals, that the biſhop of Autun [*here the aſſembly was for ſome time inattentive and agitated*] ſhould be requeſted to read the work of M. Mirabeau, and that the ſaid work ſhould be printed.

The plan of the law relative to the ſucceſſions, was the order of the day. In the midſt of the diſcuſſion, the biſhop of Autun aſcended the tribune, with the production of Mirabeau in his hand. A melancholy ſilence reigned throughout the aſſembly.

"I went yeſterday, ſaid he, to the houſe of M. Mirabeau, in which I found a great concourſe, and which I entered with ſenſations of ſorrow ſtill more keen than thoſe of the public *. That ſcene of

* With what peculiar grace the French expreſs themſelves, on all occaſions where the emotions of the heart are concerned! W.

deſolation filled the ſoul with the image of death: it was every where, except in the breaſt of him, who was now threatened with the moſt imminent danger. He enquired for me. I did not ſuppreſs the emotions, which ſeveral parts of his diſcourſe raiſed within me. M. Mirabeau, at that inſtant, was ſtill a public man; and it is alſo in that point of view, that we may conſider his laſt words as precious fragments, ſnatched from that immenſe prey, which death hath juſt now ſeized on. Summoning up all his concern for the ſequel of the labours of this aſſembly, he took notice that the law relating to ſucceſſions, was the order of this day; he teſtified regret, at his being unable to be preſent at the diſcuſſion *; and on ſuch

* "And thou, brave *Cobham*, with thy lateſt breath,
"Shall feel the ruling paſſion ev'n in death;
"Such in thoſe moments, as in all the paſt,
"O ſave my country, Heav'n, ſhall be your laſt."

POPE.

regret

regret ſeemed to depend the value which he ſet on death *. But, as his opinion upon the ſubject now before you, is in writing, he entruſted it to me, that I might read it in his name. I am going to fulfil that duty. Every mark of the applauſe which this opinion is about to merit, muſt excite the moſt lively emotions in the heart. The author of this production is no more; I am preſenting you with his laſt work; and ſuch was the union between his feelings and his thoughts,

* This appears to me to be ſomewhat affectedly, and obſcurely worded, in the original.——" Et c'étoit avec des regrets pareils, qu'il paroiſſoit evaluer la mort "——Does the Biſhop mean that *Mirabeau* was ſorry to die, as it prevented his attending the debate on the ſucceſſions? or, that he was glad to die, ſince he could not attend it?—The ſenſe ſeems naturally to be this; that the only reaſon he had

thoughts, both equally devoted to the cauſe of the public, that, while liſtening to it, you are almoſt receiving his laſt breath."

APRIL 3, 1791.

Deputations and Petitions relative to the Death of Mirabeau.

A deputation from the ſections of Paris was introduced at the bar. In conſternation at the loſs which the nation had juſt ſuſtained, and deſirous of paying the homage of eſteem and gratitude to the *manes* of Mirabeau, they ſignified a wiſh

had for wiſhing to live longer, was, that he might have it in his power to ſerve his country in the National Aſſembly. W

that

that he ſhould be interred in the field of the Federation, under the altar of their country.

This beautiful idea was applauded.

New ideas on the ſame ſubject are offered: the department of Paris comes to do homage to the deceaſed.

M. la Rochefoucault, at the head of a deputation, expreſſed himſelf as follows:

" The adminiſtration of the department of Paris, hath, for theſe ſome days, conſidered M. Mirabeau as one of its members. It is by this title that, clad in the garb of woe, we are come to ſpeak of him to the repreſentatives of the nation, and to render the tribute of our earneſt wiſh, that the æra of French liberty may become the æra alſo of homage, offered up to the glory of men who ſhall have deſerved

deſerved the gratitude of their country. We will read to you, if you will permit us, the extract from the deliberation of the directory."

M. Paſtoret, procurator-general-ſyndic, read the reſolution of the directory of department. This piece was couched in the following terms:

Extract from the Regiſters of the Directory of Department.

The procurator-general-ſyndic ſaid: "Gentlemen, it is ſcarce a week, ſince Mirabeau, ſeated amongſt us, preſented, with his energetic oratory, the means of regenerating the empire, of regenerating public tranquillity; and already is Mirabeau no more.

"When death vanquiſhed that illuſtrious American, whoſe name recalls to our memory

memory all that the moſt tranſcendent genius, the moſt active ſpirit of liberty, the moſt auguſt virtue hath to boaſt of, the French orator, from the tribune of the National Aſſembly, called on France and the whole world to mourn publicly for the loſs. You have juſt rendered to that orator the ſame homage of eſteem and ſorrow; but, gentlemen, by that homage you have not wholly performed your part.

" Amidſt the juſt affliction occaſioned by a death, which, at this moment, may be conſidered as a public calamity, the ſole mean of diverting our thoughts from ſo mournful a recollection, is to ſeek, in the misfortune itſelf, a noble leſſon for poſterity.

" The tears which are ſhed for the loſs of a great man, ought not to be barren

ren tears. Several nations of antiquity depoſited in grand monuments, the aſhes of their prieſts and their heroes. The ſort of worſhip which they rendered to piety and to courage, let us now render to the love of human happineſs and liberty. Let the temple of religion become the temple of patriotiſm *. Let the tomb of a great man become the altar of freedom.

" It is well known, that a neighbouring nation religiouſly repoſits, in one of her venerable temples, the remains of thoſe citizens, whoſe memory public gratitude hath conſecrated. And why ſhould not France adopt this ſublime example? Why ſhould not the obſequies of her patriots, become an article of national expence?

* Le temple de la patrie.

" But,

" But, with reſpect to ſuch a wiſh, all that we can do, is to expreſs it; it belongs to our repreſentatives, to thoſe whom we have ſo juſtly entruſted, with the care of our laws and of our proſperity, to beſtow on it an auguſt character. Let us haſten, then, to make it known to them, and let a ſolemn decree inform the univerſe, that France at length is dedicating to the defenders of the people, the monuments which, heretofore, were erected to the chance of birth and of battles."

The procurator-general-ſyndic being heard, the directory reſolves, that a deputation ſhall be ſent to the National Aſſembly, to requeſt:

1. That it may be decreed, that the new church of Saint Geneviéve be deſtined

ſtined to receive the aſhes of great men, from the date of the æra of our liberty.

2. That it ſhall be lawful for the National Aſſembly alone, to determine to what perſons that honour ſhall be decreed.

3. That Honoré Riquetti de Mirabeau be deemed worthy of that honour.

4. That with regard to exceptions in favour of certain great men, whoſe deaths were prior to the revolution, ſuch as Deſcartes, Voltaire, and Jean Jacques Rouſſeau, it ſhall be lawful for the National Aſſembly alone to make them.

5. That the directory of the department of Paris, be ordered to put, forthwith, the new church of Saint Geneviéve, in a condition fit to anſwer the end of its new deſtination, and that the directors be likewiſe ordered, to inſcribe upon the

front:

front: *Dedicated to great men, by the gratitude of their country* *.

This addreſs was eagerly applauded, and the anſwer given by the preſident, added to the impreſſion which it had made.

" When the National Aſſembly, ſaid he, heard the eloquent voice of Mirabeau, recommend that public honours ſhould be paid to the memory of Franklin, it little expected that our grief, and that of the whole kingdom, would ſo ſoon aſk for the like homage at the tomb of our late colleague. He was alſo yours, gentlemen, and the National Aſſembly receives with ſenſibility, the wiſh whereby you expreſs the ſenſation of that gratitude, offered up to one of the firſt and greateſt champions of our liberty. You have, gentlemen, at the ſame time, ge-

* Aux grands hommes la patrie reconnoiſſante.

neralized your ideas; and, in the plan which you preſent to us, we perceive with a lively pleaſure, that the talents and the characteriſtics of the adminiſtration, are accompanied with thoſe ſentiments of eſteem and amity, which united you to our common colleague.

"Although the panegyric of that celebrated man, may be found complete in his productions, it cannot be a matter of indifference, to know the opinion which his colleagues had entertained of him."

M. *Fermont.* "I have remarked two diſtinct objects in the reſolutions of the department; the one, to decree honours to great men, after their death; the other to beſtow ſuch honours upon one of our colleagues. The firſt idea which offers itſelf to the mind, is, to know whether the

the great man whom we have loſt, is to undergo the examination required by the department. In calculating the effects of human paſſions, perhaps it will be thought, that this ſame examination ought not to be made by the legiſlative body: I therefore move, that the reſolutions of the department be referred to the committee of conſtitution."

The previous queſtion was called for upon the motion juſt mentioned.

M. *Roberſpierre.* " As to the object reſpecting M. Mirabeau, I am of opinion that no perſon can maintain that is not juſt. It is not at the moment, when we hear echoed from every ſide, the lamentations excited by the loſs of that illuſtrious man, who, at junctures the moſt critical, diſplayed ſo high courage againſt deſpotiſm, it is not at ſuch a time, that oppo-

ſition ſhould be made to motions for decreeing him certain marks of honour. I ſecond with all my might, or rather with all my ſenſibility, the propoſal of the department. As to the other object of the petition, it appears to me to be connected with the cauſe of liberty and of our country, and I move that it be referred to the committee of conſtitution."

M. *Barnave.* "The different objects which are before us, are removing from our view, the true point of deliberation laid down by M. Roberſpierre. We cannot, at preſent, pay attention to the mode which ſhall be adopted, for conſecrating the nation's gratitude towards thoſe who have well ſerved her. The details which ſuch a diſcuſſion would render it neceſſary for us to enter upon, would diſturb and degrade the deep ſentiment with which

we are penetrated. This ſentiment paſſes judgment upon Mirabeau, ſince it is the remembrance of all the ſervices, which Mirabeau hath rendered to the liberty of this country. To pronounce this judgment, is the queſtion at the preſent moment. I move that a decree be drawn up in the following terms: 'The National Aſſembly declares, that Honoré 'Riquetti Mirabeau hath merited the 'honours, which the nation ſhall decree 'to the great men who have well ſerved 'her.'—Refer the ſurplus of the petition to the committee of conſtitution, with an injunction to make their report without delay."

In this manner were both the objects diſpoſed of.

APRIL 4, 1791.

Decree relative to the Honours to be paid to the Memory of great Men, and particularly to that of Mirabeau.

The intentions of the aſſembly were fully anſwered, by the diſpatch with which the petition of the department of Paris, had been debated in the committee. M. Chapelier reported, that the committee of conſtitution had been the more expeditious in that affair, as it was evident that the deſign was, ſtill more to honour the memory of that great man, the loſs of whom the whole nation was at that inſtant deploring, than to decree, on the preſent occaſion, a public monument to the great men, who had deſerved the gratitude of their country. There remains, he further obſerved,

obſerved, but one difficulty. M. Mirabeau hath deſired in his will, to be interred at his country-ſeat at Argenteuil; but he did not, at that time, foreſee the honours which his country was to decree him. It is the opinion of your committee, that the remains of that great man are the property of his country, as he himſelf was its property, while living. The committee propoſes the following plan of decree:

The National Aſſembly, having heard the report of the committee of conſtitution, decrees as follows:

" Article I. The new church of Saint Geneviéve ſhall be deſtined to receive the aſhes of great men, from the date of the æra of French liberty.

" II. The legiſlative body alone ſhall

determine, to what perſons that honour ſhall be decreed.

" III. Honoré Riquetti Mirabeau is judged worthy of that honour.

" IV. It ſhall not be lawful for the legiſlature, when near the time of its expiration, to decree that honour to any of its members: it ſhall belong to the enſuing legiſlature to beſtow it.

" V. The exceptions in favour of certain great men, whoſe deaths were prior to the revolution, ſhall be made by the legiſlative body only.

" VI. The directory of the department of Paris ſhall be enjoined, to prepare immediately the church of Saint Geneviéve, for its new deſtination.

" On the front of that edifice ſhall be engraved theſe words:

AUX

AUX GRANDS HOMMES,
LA PATRIE RECONNOISSANTE.

"Until the new church of Saint Geneviéve ſhall be ready, the remains of Riquetti Mirabeau ſhall be repoſited near the body of Deſcartes, in the vault of the old church of Saint Geneviéve."

The aſſembly adopted, with tranſport, the plan of decree preſented by the committee.

When buſineſs was about half over, the preſident gave notice, that the funeral of M. Mirabeau would be ready to ſet out at four o'clock: it was reſolved by the aſſembly, to attend it in a body.

FUNE-

FUNERAL OF MIRABEAU.

Extract from the Monitor, April 5, 1791.

" All the citizens of Paris, all the ſocieties and patriotic clubs, were eager to ſtrew flowers upon the grave of Mirabeau. On Sunday, the ſociety of Friends to the Conſtitution reſolved, 1. to attend his obſequies in a body; 2. to wear mourning for a week; 3. to reſume it periodically every year, on the 2d day of April; 4. to cauſe a marble buſt of that celebrated man to be ſculptured, on which ſhall be engraved thoſe memorable words, which he pronounced, the day the king went to the Aſſembly: *Go tell thoſe who ſent you, that we ſit here by the will of the people, and that nothing ſhall expel us but the power of the bayonet* *.

* See Vol. I. of this ſelection.

" The

" The funeral of Mirabeau took place on Monday the 4th. Never was ceremony more majeſtic. At five o'clock the proceſſion began to form: a detachment of the national cavalry of Paris took the lead; after the cavalry came a body of artillery-men and pioneers, deputed from the 60 battalions; on each ſide marched a deputation of the invalids, compoſed of the moſt infirm. A deputation from the 60 battalions of the national guard of Paris, marched ſixteen deep, preceded by the officers of the état-major, at the head of whom was M. de la Fayette: the hundred Swiſs guards, and the guards of the prévôté de l'hôtel, preceded the muſic of the national guard; the melancholy ſounds which iſſued from the muffled drums, and the heart-rending notes of the funereal inſtruments, inſpired a ſolemn

lemn terror in the ſoul: the ſpectators obſerved an univerſal and profound ſilence.

" The clergy preceded the body; the coffin was to have been carried in a hearſe; but the battalion of la Grange-Battalière, of which Mirabeau was commander, deſired to be the bearers of that glorious burthen: the body, ſurrounded by national guards, trailing their arms, was borne alternately by ſixteen ſoldier-citizens. The colours of the ſame battalion floated over the coffin. A civic crown occupied the place of the feudal enſigns *, formerly diſplayed at the obſequies of particular individuals. Next came the National Aſſembly, eſcorted by the battalion of veterans, and by that of ſoldiers-children. Theſe were followed

* His coronet and eſcutcheons.

by

by the electors, the deputies of the forty-eight ſections, the department, the municipality, the judges of the tribunal of Paris, the municipal officers of ſeveral neighbouring towns, the ſociety of the Friends to the Conſtitution, the king's miniſters, the ſociety of 1789, and all the brotherhoods and patriotic clubs in Paris. The proceſſion was cloſed by a conſiderable detachment of infantry and cavalry. This whole train, which extended more than a league in length, proceeded in the greateſt order, between a double line of national guards, and an innumerable crowd of citizens, of both ſexes and of all ages. Sadneſs was viſible in every face; many of the by-ſtanders wept, and all experienced that deep and heart-felt ſorrow, which a great public loſs inſpires.

" After moving for three hours in awful

ful ſilence, the proceſſion arrived at Saint Euſtache. The whole church was hung with black. A ſarcophagus was erected in the middle of the choir. After the cuſtomary ſervice, M. Cerutti delivered a diſcourſe, in which he conſidered Mirabeau as a politician and as a legiſlator. In taking notice of his civic virtues, and of the ſervices which he had rendered to his country, the orator drew tears from the eyes of all his auditors. When this diſcourſe was finiſhed, the proceſſion again ſet forward for Saint Geneviéve. The ſame order, the ſame ſilence was obſerved. The funeral reached the church at midnight, and the body of Mirabeau was depoſited beſide that of Deſcartes. It is to remain there, till the new church, which the National Aſſembly hath ordered to be finiſhed, be in a ſtate proper for

the reception of the aſhes of thoſe, whom the nation ſhall deem worthy of that honour *."

* We have now conſigned the illuſtrious French orator to the grave, after having liſtened to him with admiration and aſtoniſhment in the aſſembly. I ſay, liſtened to him; for it ſeemed as if we were preſent, as if we beheld him, as if his voice were vibrating on our ears. Aſſuredly, except the Emperor Peter I. of Ruſſia, this century hath not ſeen a more extraordinary man.

Franklin, Waſhington, Mirabeau—what a glorious triumvirate! I am no republican; I love our limited monarchy in my ſoul; but I cannot forbear contributing my portion of applauſe, to men who have been the aſſertors of liberty.

The excellent and lamented Mirabeau was ſnatched away in the vigour of life, in the zenith of his fame, in the grand career of his philanthropy. He expired at the age of forty-two years. Young man, (for I will not addreſs myſelf to the callous heart of the ſexagenary) young man, who ſhall have happened to peruſe theſe pages, know that what is here

tranſlated,

tranſlated, forms but an inconſiderable part of the political works of Mirabeau. I mention this, in order that you may be ſenſible what wonders can be wrought, by a mind occupied and inflamed with a paſſion for true glory.

To the praiſe of the preſent æra, and as a circumſtance of ſplendour and dignity in the times, be it remarked, and remarked with exultation, that the young have taken the lead in almoſt every great adventure, which hath promoted the proſperity of mankind. Franklin, indeed, was venerable. But caſt your eyes around you; look on England, on Ireland, on Poland, on France,—every thing illuſtrious, every thing ſublime, is there the workmanſhip of men who are yet in the ſpring of life. Senates are convinced, abuſes overturned, conſtitutions created, legiſlation is dignified, the helm of empire guided, laudable and ſtupendous revolutions are effected, by ſages who have yet ſcarce accompliſhed their eighth luſtrum. They have ſnatched the ſceptre of influence from the jealous graſp of age, and committed it to the hand of virtue; for what is experience, when unaccompanied by integrity? The *Scipios* triumph, and the *Fabiuſes* are

are their detractors.—But theſe examples are only a few brilliant gems, which ſparkle upon the dark foil of diſſipation and inſignificance.

The funeral honours of Mirabeau, are an affecting and uſeful paſſage in the hiſtory of the revolution. If you have read with tearleſs eye, the relation of his death and obſequies, I pronounce that nature never intended you for an orator. Shut up your books upon the art of ſpeaking, abandon your Cicero and your Quinctilian; you may learn to become a tireſome talker, but you will never arrive at fame; for you are deſtitute of that ſenſibility, which is the maſter-key to eloquence.

Abjure the frivolity and corruption of the times, and dedicate your heart to that pure and ſterling patriotiſm, which is the offspring of wiſdom co-operating with probity. Become the defender, not the diſturber of the conſtitution. Let public ſpirit be your counſellor; but, in looking around for models, beware of imitating characters in the groſs; diſcriminate their virtues from their vices; ſuffer not your underſtanding to be dazzled and led aſtray, by thoſe heterogeneous mixtures of worthineſs and

depravity, of ability and infatuation, which are decked by the cunning hand of ſelf-intereſted ambition, and exhibited as patterns for the young men of the age; nor imagine that there is no mean between the hypocrite and the profligate. Better were it to admire, and ſelect for your archetype, even the regenerated good man, who may erſt have been a ſtranger to the paths of rectitude, than one of thoſe entangled characters, who are, as they ever have been, a tiſſue of ſhining qualities and miſerable defects, to unravel and ſort which, the mind of youth hath, frequently, neither the judgment nor the inclination; characters, in fine, which at once challenge our love, and provoke our averſion.

Have a care alſo of miſtaking a combination of individuals, for the great conſtitutional party of the ſtate. Mirabeau was of the only party which a wiſe man wiſhes to join; the genuine and univerſal party of the people. Keep your judgment in your own hands: petition God to enlighten your underſtanding. Diſdain (I conſider you as an independent man) to wear the trappings of court-favour, or the

livery of a faction. Independence, you will anſwer, is a vague expreſſion. But be aſſured, that independence is not to be meaſured by your eſtate, but by your mind. Stand aloof from that ſpirit of luxury and irreligion, which all monarchical governments, notwithſtanding devout and well-intended proclamations, ever artfully and ſecretly encourage. Kings may be ſolicitous for the purity of their ſubjects; but there is, in monarchy, a ſtrong and never-reſting bias towards depraving the public heart.

The portion of republican blood which flows through the veins of the Engliſh conſtitution, is unqueſtionably ſome check upon this malign and deſtructive principle. The miſchief is, with us, leſs flagrant and leſs rapid, than it is in deſpotic governments. But, if monarchy tend inſenſibly to undermine a nation's worth, the conſequences of faction are equally detrimental. The narrowneſs of conception, the political ſhortſightedneſs, the headſtrong rapacity, the venomous ſpirit, the utter contempt and dereliction of candour, the encouragement afforded to every bad paſſion, the horrid calumnies,

calumnies, and the infernal artifices, which characterize and diſhonour both her maxims and her meaſures, form a grand impoſition upon the credulity of nations, and are the ſcourge and the curſe of ſociety. W.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

